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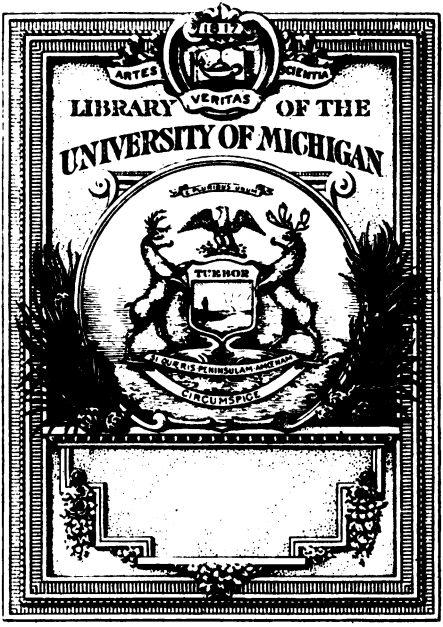
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TUBBER DERG;

OR,

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THE RED WELL.

PARTY FIGHT AND FUNERAL,

DANDY KEHOE'S CHRISTENING,

AND

OTHER IRISH TALES.

BY WILLIAM CARLETON,

AUTHOR OF "WILLY REILLY," "VALENTINE M'CLUTCHY" "THE BLACK BARONET," "THE EVIL EYE," ETC., ETC.

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TUBBER DERG;

OR

THE RED WELL.

THE following story owes nothing to any colouring or invention of mine; it is unhappily a true one, and to me possesses a peculiar and melancholy interest, arising from my intimate knowledge of the man whose fate it holds up as a moral lesson to Irish landlords. I knew him well, and many a day and hour have I played about his knee, and ran, in my boyhood, round his path, when, as he said to himself, the world was no trouble to him.

On the south side of a sloping tract of light ground, lively, warm, and productive, stood a white, moderate-sized farm-house, which, in consequence of its conspicuous situation, was a prominent and, we may add, a graceful object in the landscape of which it formed a part. The spot whereon it stood was a swelling natural terrace, the soil of which was heavier and richer than that of the adjoining lands. On each side of the house stood a clump of old beeches, the only survivors of that species then remaining in the country. These beeches extended behind the house in a kind of angle, with opening enough at their termination to form a vista, through which its white walls glistened with beautiful effect in the calm splendour of a summer evening. Above the mound on which it stood, rose two steep hills, overgrown with furze and fern, except on their tops, which were clothed with purple heath; they were also covered with patches of broom, and

studded with gray rocks, which sometimes rose singly or in larger masses, pointed or rounded into curious and fantastic shapes. Exactly between these hills the sun went down during the month of June, and nothing could be in finer relief than the rocky and picturesque outlines of their sides, as crowned with thorns and clumps of wild ash, they appeared to overhang the valley, whose green foliage was gilded by the sunbeams, which lit up the scene into radiant beauty. The bottom of this natural chasm, which opened against the deep crimson of the evening sky, was nearly upon a level with the house, and completely so with the beeches that surrounded it. Brightly did the sinking sun fall upon their tops, whilst the neat white house below, in their quiet shadow, sent up its wreath of smoke among their branches, itself an emblem of contentment, industry, and innocence. It was, in fact, a lovely situation; perhaps the brighter to me, that its remembrance is associated with days of happiness, and freedom from the cares of a world, which, like a distant mountain, darkens as we approach it, and only exhausts us in struggling to climb its rugged and barren paths.

There was to the south-west of this house another little hazel glen, that ended in a precipice formed by a single rock some thirty feet high, over which tumbled a crystal cascade into a basin worn in its hard bed below. From this basin the stream murmured away through the copse-wood, until it joined a larger rivulet that passed, with many a winding, through a fine extent of meadows adjoining it. Across the foot of this glen, and past the door of the house we have described, ran a bridle road, from time immemorial; on which, as the traveller ascended it towards the house, he appeared to track his way in blood, for a chalybeate *spa* arose at its head, oozing out of the earth, and spread itself in a crimson stream over the path in every spot whereon a foot-mark could be made. From this circumstance it was called Tubber Derg, or the Red Well. In the meadow where the glen

terminated, was another spring of delicious crystal; and clearly do I remember the ever-beaten path-way that led to it through the grass, and up the green field which rose in a gentle slope to the happy-looking house of Owen M'Carthy, for so was the man called who resided under its peaceful roof.

I will not crave your pardon, gentle reader, for dwelling at such length upon a scene so dear to my heart as this, because I write not now so much for your gratification as my own. Many an eve of gentle May have I pulled the Maygowans which grew about that well, and over that smooth meadow. Often have I raised my voice to its shrillest pitch, that I might hear its echoes rebounding in the bottom of the green and still glen, where silence, so to speak, was deepened by the continuous murmur of the cascade above; and when the cuckoo uttered her first note from among the hawthorns on its side, with what trembling anxiety did I, an urchin of some eight or nine years, look under my right foot for the white hair, whose charm was such, that by keeping it about me the first female name I should hear was destined, I believed in my soul, to be that of my future wife.* Sweet was the song of the thrush, and mellow the whistle of the blackbird, as they rose in the stillness of evening over the "hirken shaws" and green dells of this secluded spot of rural beauty. Far, too, could the rich voice of Owen M'Carthy be heard along the hills and meadows, as, with a little chubby urchin at his knee, and another in his arms, he sat on a bench beside his own door, singing the "Trougha," in his native Irish, whilst Kathleen his wife, with her two maids, each crooning a low song, sat before the door, milking the cows, whose sweet breath mingled its perfume with the warm breeze of evening.

Owen M'Carthy was descended from a long line of honest ancestors, whose names had never, within the memory of man, been tarnished by the commission of

*Such is the superstition; and, as I can tell, faithfully is it believed.

a mean or disreputable action. They were always a kind-hearted family, but stern and proud in the common intercourse of life. They believed themselves to be, and probably were, a branch of the MacCarthy More stock; and, although only the possessors of a small farm, it was singular to observe the effect which this conviction produced upon their bearing and manners. To it might, perhaps, be attributed the high and stoical integrity for which they were remarkable. This severity, however, was no proof that they wanted feeling, or were insensible to the misery and sorrows of others; in all the little cares and perplexities that chequered the peaceful neighbourhood in which they lived, they were ever the first to console, or, if necessary, to support a distressed neighbour with the means which God had placed in their possession; for, being industrious, they were seldom poor. Their words were few, but sincere, and generally promised less than the honest hearts that dictated them intended to perform. There is in some persons a hereditary feeling of just principle, the result neither of education nor of a clear moral sense, but rather a kind of instinctive honesty which descends, like a constitutional bias, from father to son, pervading every member of the family. It is difficult to define this, or to assign its due position in the scale of human virtues. It exists in the midst of the grossest ignorance, and influences the character in the absence of better principles. Such was the impress which marked so strongly the family of which I speak. No one would ever think of imputing a dishonest act to the M'Carthys; nor would any person acquainted with them, hesitate for a moment to consider their word as good as the bond of another. I do not mean to say, however, that their motives of action were not higher than this instinctive honesty; far from it: but I say, that they possessed it in *addition* to a strong feeling of family pride, and a correct knowledge of their moral duties.

I can only take up Owen M'Carthy at that part of

the past to which my memory extends. He was then a tall, fine-looking young man; silent, but kind. One of the earliest events within my recollection is his wedding; after that the glimpse of his state and circumstances are imperfect; but as I grew up, they became more connected, and I am able to remember him the father of four children; an industrious, inoffensive, small farmer, beloved, respected, and honoured. No man could rise, be it ever so early, who would not find Owen up before him; no man could anticipate him in an early crop, and if a widow or a sick acquaintance were unable to get in their harvest, Owen was certain to collect the neighbours to assist them; to be the first there himself, with quiet benevolence, encouraging them to a zealous performance of the friendly task in which they were engaged.

It was, I believe, soon after his marriage, that the lease of the farm held by him expired. Until that time he had been able to live with perfect independence; but even the enormous rise of one pound per acre, though it deprived him in a great degree of his usual comforts, did not sink him below the bare necessaries of life. For some years after that, he could still serve a deserving neighbour; and never was the hand of Owen M'Carthy held back from the wants and distresses of those whom he knew to be honest.

I remember once an occasion upon which a widow Murray applied to him for a loan of five pounds, to prevent her two cows from being auctioned for half a year's rent, of which she only wanted that sum. Owen sat at dinner with his family when she entered the house in tears, and, as well as her agitation of mind permitted, gave him a detailed account of her embarrassment.

"The blessin' o' God be upon all here," said she, on entering.

"The double o' that to you, Rosha," replied Owen's wife: "won't you sit in an' be atin'?—here's a sate beside Nanny; come over, Rosha."

Owen only nodded to her, and continued to eat his

dinner, as if he felt no interest in her distress. Rosha sat down at a distance, and with the corner of a red handkerchief to her eyes, shed tears in that bitterness of feeling which marks the helplessness of honest industry under the pressure of calamity.

"In the name o' goodness, Rosha," said Mrs. M'Carthy, "what ails you, asthore? Sure Jimmy—God spare him to you—wouldn't be dead?"

"Glory be to God! no avourneen machree. Och, och! but it 'ud be the black sight, an' the black day, that 'ud see my brave boy, the staff of our support, an' the bread of our mouth, taken away from us!—No, no, Kathleen dear, it's not that bad wid me yet. I hope we'll never live to see his manly head laid down before us. 'Twas his own manliness, indeed, brought it an him—backin' the sack when he was bringin' home our last *meldhre** from the mill; for you see he should do it, the crathur, to show his strinth, an' the sack, when he got it an was too heavy for him, an' hurted the small of his back; for his bones, you see, are too young, an' hadn't time to fill up yet. No, avourneen. Glory be to God! he's gettin' betther wid me!" and the poor creature's eyes glistened with delight through her tears and the darkness of her affliction.

Without saying a word, Owen, when she finished the eulogium on her son, rose, and taking her forcibly by the shoulder, set her down at the table, on which a large potful of potatoes had been spread out, with a circle in the middle for a dish of rashers and eggs, into which dish every right hand of those about it was thrust, with a quickness that clearly illustrated the principle of competition as a stimulus to action.

"Spare your breath," said Owen, placing her rather roughly upon the seat, "an' take share of what's goin': when all's cleared off we'll hear you, but the sorra word till then."

* Meldhre—whatever quantity of grain is brought to the mill to be ground on one occasion.

"Musha, Owen," said the poor woman, "you're the same man still; sure we all know your ways; I'll strive, avourneen, to ate—I'll strive, asthore—to plase you, an' the Lord bless you an' yours, an' may you never be as I an' my fatherless childhre are this sorrowful day!" and she accompanied her words by a flood of tears.

Owen, without evincing the slighest sympathy, withdrew himself from the table. Not a muscle of his face was moved; but as the cat came about his feet at the time, he put his foot under her, and flung her as easily as possible to the lower end of the kitchen.

"Arrah, what harm did the crathur do," asked his wife, "that you'd kick her for, that way? an' why but you *eat out* your dinner?"

"*I'm* done," he replied, "but that's no rason that Rosha, an' you, an' thim boys that has the work afore them, shouldn't finish your male's mate."

Poor Rosha thought that by his withdrawing he had already suspected the object of her visit, and of course concluded that her chance of succeeding was very slender.

The wife, who guessed what she wanted, as well as the nature of her suspicion, being herself as affectionate and obliging as Owen, reverted to the subject, in order to give her an opportunity of proceeding.

"Somethin' bitther an' out o' the common coorse, is a throuble to you, Rosha," said she, "or you wouldn't be in the state you're in. The Lord look down on you this day, you poor crathur—widout the father of your childhre to stand up for you, an' your only other depindance laid on the broad of his back, all as one as a cripple; but no matther, Rosha; trust to Him that can be a husband to you, an' a father to your orphans—trust to Him, an' his blessed mother in heaven, this day, an' never fear but they'll *rise* up a frind for you. Musha, Owen ate your dinner as you ought to do, wid your capers! How can you take a spade in your hand upon that morsel?"

"Finish your own," said her husband, "an' never heed me; jist let me alone. Don't you see that if I wanted it, I'd ate it, an' what more would you have about!"

"Well, acushla, it's your own loss, sure, of a sartinty. An', Rosha, whisper, ahagur, what can Owen or I do for you? Troth, it would be a bad day we'd see you at a *deshort** for a friend, for you never wor nothin' else nor a civil, oblagin' neighbour yourself; an' him that's gone before—the Lord make his bed in heaven this day—was as good a warrant as ever broke bread, to sarve a friend, if it was at the hour of midnight."

"Ah! when I had *him*," exclaimed the distracted widow, "I never had occasion to trouble aither friend or neighbour; but he's gone, an' now it's otherwise wid me—glory be to God for all his mercies—a wurrah dheelish! Why, thin, since I must spake, an' has no other frind to go to—but somehow I doubt Owen looks dark upon me—sure I'd put my hand to a stamp, if my word wouldn't do for it, an' sign the blessed crass that saved us, for the payment of it; or I'd give it to him in oats, for I hear you want some, Owen—Phatie oats it is, an' a betther shouldhered or fuller-lookin' grain never went undher a harrow—indeed, it's it that's the beauty all out, if it's good seed you want."

"What is it for, woman alive?" inquired Owen, as he kicked a three-legged stool out of his way.

"What is it for, is it? Och, Owen darlin', sure my two brave cows is lavin' me. Owen M'Murt, the driver, is over wid me beyant, an' has them ready to set off wid. I reared them both, the two of them, wid my own hands; *Cheehoney*, that knows my voice, an' would come to me from the fardest corner o' the field, is goin', an' nothin' will we have—nothin' will my poor sick boy have—but the black wather, or the dhry salt; besides the butther of them bein' lost to us for

* That is at a loss; or more properly speaking, taken short, which it means.

the rent, or a small taste of it, of an odd time, for poor Jimmy. Owen, next to God, I have no friend to depind upon but yourself!"

"Me!" said Owen, as if astonished. "Phoo, that's quare enough! Now do you think, Rosha—hut, tut, woman alive! Come, boys, you're all done; out wid you to your spades, an finish that *meerin** before night. Me!—hut, tut!"

"I have it all but five pounds, Owen, an' for the sake of him that's in his grave—an' that, maybe, is able to put up his prayer for you"——

"An' what would you want *me* to do Rosha? Fitther for you to sit down an' finish your dinner, when it's before you. I'm goin' to get an ould glove† that's somewhere about this chist, for I must weed out that bit of oats before night, wid a blessin'," and, as he spoke he passed into another room, as if he had altogether forgotten her solicitation, and in a few minutes returned.

"Owen, avick!—an' the blessin' of the fatherless be upon you, sure, an' many a one o' them you have, anyhow, Owen!"

"Well, Rosha—well?"

"Och, och, Owen, it's low days wid me to be depindin' upon the sthranger? Little thim that reared me ever thought it 'ud come to this. You know I'm a dacent father's child, an' I have stooped to you, Owen M'Carthy—what I'd scorn to do to any other but yourself—poor an' friendless as I stand here before you. Let them take the cows, thin, from my childhre; but the father of the fatherless will support thim an' me. Och, but it's well for the O'Donohoes that their landlord lives at home among themselves, for may the heavens look down on me, I wouldn't know where to find mine, if one sight of him 'ud save me an' my childhre from the grave! The agent even, he lives in Dublin, an' how could I lave my sick boy an' small

* Meerin—a march ditch, a boundary.

† In "hand-weeding," old gloves are used to prevent the hands from being injured by the thistles.

girshas by themselves, to go a hundred miles, an' maybe not see him afther all. Little hopes I'd have from him, even if I did; he's paid for gatherin' in his rents; but it's well known he wants the touch of nathur for the sufferins of the poor, an' of them that's honest in their intintions."

"I'll go over wid you, Rosha, if that will be of any use," replied Owen, composedly; "come, I'll go an' spake to Frank M'Murt."

"The sorra blame I blame him, Owen," replied Rosha, "his bread's depindin' upon the likes of sich doins, an' he can't get over it; but a word from you, Owen, will save me, for who ever refused to take the word of a M'Carthy."

When Owen and the widow arrived at the house of the latter, they found the situation of the bailiff laughable in the extreme. Her eldest son, who had been confined to his bed by a hurt received in his back, was up, and had got the unfortunate driver, who was rather old, wedged in between the dresser and the wall, where his cracked voice—for he was asthmatic—was raised to the highest pitch, calling for assistance. Beside him was a large tub half-filled with water, into which the little ones were emptying small jugs, carried at the top of their speed from a puddle before the door. In the meantime, Jemmy was tugging at the bailiff with all his strength—fortunately for that personage, it was but little—with the most sincere intention of inverting him into the tub which contained as much muddy water as would have been sufficient to make him a subject for the deliberation of a coroner and twelve honest men. Nothing could be more conscientiously attempted than the task which Jemmy had proposed to execute; every tug brought out his utmost strength, and when he failed in pulling down the bailiff, he compensated himself for his want of success, by cuffing his ribs, and peeling his shins by hard kicks; whilst from those open points which the driver's grapple with his man naturally exposed, were inflicted on him by the re-

joicing urchins, numberless punches of tongs, potatoe-washers, and sticks whose points were from time to time hastily thrust into the coals, that they might more effectually either blind or disable him in some other manner.

As one of the little ones ran out to fill his jug, he spied his mother and Owen approaching, on which, with the empty vessel in his hand, he flew towards them, his little features distorted by glee and ferocity, wildly mixed up together.

"Oh mudher, mudher—ha, ha, ha!—don't come in yet; don't come in Owen, till Jimmy, an' huz, an' the Denisses, gets the Bailie drownded. We 'll soon have the *bot** full; but Paddy an' Jack Denis have the eyes a'most pucked out of him; an' Katty 's takin' the rapin' hook from behind the *cuppel*, to get it about his neck."

Owen and the widow entered with all haste, precisely at the moment when Frank's head was dipped, for the first time, into the vessel.

"Is it goin' to murdher him ye are?" said Owen, as he seized Jemmy with a grasp that transferred him to the opposite end of the house; "hould back ye pack of young devils, an' let the man up. What did he come to do but his duty? I tell you, Jimmy, if you wor *at* yourself, an' in full strinth, that you 'd have the man's blood on you where you stand, and would suffer as you ought to do for it."

"There let me," replied the lad, his eyes glowing, and his veins swollen with passion; "I don't care if I did. It would be no sin, an' no disgrace, to hang for the like of him; dacenter to do that, than stale a creel of turf, or a wisp of straw, 'tanny rate."

In the meantime the bailiff had raised his head out of the water, and presented a visage which it was impossible to view with gravity. The widow's anxiety prevented her from seeing it in a ludicrous light; but Owen's severe face assumed a grave smile, as the man

* Tub.

shook himself, and attempted to comprehend the nature of his situation. The young urchins, who had fallen back at the appearance of Owen and the widow, now burst into a peal of mirth, in which, however, Jemmy, whose fiercer passions had been roused, did not join.

"Frank M'Murt," said the widow, "I take the mother of heaven to witness, that it vexes my heart to see you get sich thratement in my place; an' I wouldn't for the best cow I have that sich a *brieuliagh** happened. *Dher charp agus manim*,† Jimmy, but I 'll make you suffer for drawin' down this upon my head, and me had enough over it afore."

"I don't care," replied Jemmy; "whoever comes to take our property from us, an' us willin' to work, will suffer for it. Do you think I'd see thim crathurs at their dhry phatie, an' our cows standin' in a pound for no rason? No; high hangin' to me, but I 'll split to the scull the first man that takes them; an' all I 'm sorry for is, that it 's not the vagabone landlord himself that 's near me. That 's our thanks for payin' many a good pound, in honesty an' dacency, to him an' his; lavin' us to a schamin' agent, an' not even to that same, but to his undher-strappers, that 's robbin us on both sides between them. May hard fortune attind him for a landlord! You may tell him this, Frank,—that his wisest plan is to keep clear of the counthry. Sure, it 's a gambler he is, they say; an' we must be harrished an' racked to support his villany! But wait a bit; maybe there 's a good time comin', when we 'll pay our money to thim that won't be too proud to hear our complaints wid their own ears, an' who won't turn us over to a divil's limb of an agent. *He* had need, anyhow, to get his coffin sooner nor he thinks. What signifies hangin' in a good cause?" said he, as the tears of keen indignation burst from his glowing eyes. "It 's a dacent death, an' a happy death, when it's for the right," he added—for his mind was

* Brieuliagh—squabble. † By my soul and body.

evidently fixed upon the contemplation of those means of redress, which the habits of the country, and the prejudices of the people, present to them in the first moments of passion.

"It's well that Frank 's one of ourselves," replied Owen coolly, "otherwise, Jemmy, you said words that would lay you by the heels. As for you, Frank, you must look over this. The boy 's the son of dacent poor parents, an' it 's a new thing for him to see the cows druv from the place. The poor fellow 's vexed, too, that he has been so long laid up wid a sore back; an' so you see one thing or another has put him through other. Jimmy is warm-hearted afther all, an' will be sorry for it when he cools, an' remimbers that *you* wor only doin' your duty."

"But what am I to do about the cows? Sure, I can't go back widout either them or the rint?" said Frank, with a look of fear and trembling at Jemmy.

"The cows!" said another of the widow's sons who then came in; "why, you dirty spalpeen of a rip, you may whistle on the wrong side o' your mouth for them. I *druv* them off the estate; an' now take them, if you dar! It 's conthrairy to law," said the urchin; "an' if you'd touch them, I'd make my mudher sarve you wid a *lattitat* or a *fiery-flashes*."

This was a triumph to the youngsters, who began to shake their little fists at him, and to exclaim in a chorus—"Ha, you dirty rip! wait till we get you out o' the house, an' if we don't put you from ever drivin'! Why, but you work like another?—ha, you'll get it!"—and every little fist was shook in vengeance against him.

"Whisht wid ye," said Jemmy to the little ones: "let him alone, he got enough. There's the cows for you; and keen may the curse o' the widow an' orphans light upon you, and upon them that sent you, from first to last!—an' that's the *best* we wish you!"

"Frank," said Owen to the bailiff, "is there any one in the town below that will take the rint, an' give a resate for it? Do you think, man, that the neigh-

bours of an honest, industrious woman 'ud see the cattle taken out of her byre for a thrifle? Hut, tut! no, man alive—no sich thing! There's not a man in the parish, wid manes to do it, would see them taken away to be canted, at only about a fourth part of their value. Hut, tut—no!"

As the sterling fellow spoke, the cheeks of the widow were suffused with tears, and her son Jemmy's hollow eyes were once more kindled, but with a far different expression from that which but a few minutes before flashed from them.

"Owen," said he, and utterance nearly failed him: "Owen, if *I* was well, it wouldn't be as it is wid us; but—no, indeed, it would not: but—may God bless you for this! Owen, never fear but you'll be paid; may God bless you, Owen!"

As he spoke the hand of his humble benefactor was warmly grasped in his. A tear fell upon it: for with one of those quick and fervid transitions of feeling so peculiar to the people, he now felt a strong, generous emotion of gratitude, mingled, perhaps, with a sense of wounded pride, on finding the poverty of their little family so openly exposed.

"Hut, tut, Jimmy, avick," said Owen, who understood his feelings; "phoo, man alive! hut—hem!—why, sure, it's nothin' at all, at all; anybody would do it—only a bare five-an'-twenty shillins, [it was five pound]:—any neighbour—Mick Cassidy, Jack Moran, or Peter M'Cullagh, would do it.—Come, Frank, step out; the money's to the fore. Rosha, put your cloak about you, and let us go down to the agint, or clerk, or whosomever he is—sure, that makes no maxim anyhow; I suppose he has power to give a resate. Jemmy, go to bed again, you're pale, poor bouchal; and, childhre, ye crathurs ye, the cows won't be taken from ye this bout. Come, in the name of God, let us go, and see everything rightified at once—hut, tut—come."

Many similar details of Owen M'Carthy's useful life could be given, in which he bore an equally bene-

volent and Christian part. Poor fellow, he was, ere long, brought low; but, to the credit of our peasantry, much as is said about their barbarity, he was treated, when helpless, with gratitude, pity, and kindness.

Until the peace of 1814, Owen's regular and systematic industry enabled him to struggle successfully against a weighty rent and sudden depression in the price of agricultural produce; that is, he was able, by the unremitting toil of a man remarkable alike for an unbending spirit and a vigorous frame of body, to pay his rent with tolerable regularity. It is true, a change began to be visible in his personal appearance, in his farm, in the dress of his children, and in the economy of his household. Improvements, which adequate capital would have enabled him to effect, were left either altogether unattempted, or in an imperfect state, resembling neglect, though, in reality, the result of poverty. His dress at mass, and in fairs and markets, had, by degrees, lost that air of comfort and warmth which bespeak the independent farmer. The evidences of embarrassment began to disclose themselves in many small points—inconsiderable, it is true, but not the less significant. His house, in the progress of his declining circumstances, ceased to be annually ornamented by a new coat of whitewash; it soon assumed a faded and yellowish hue, and sparkled not in the setting sun, as in the days of Owen's prosperity. It had, in fact, a wasted, unthriving look, like its master. The thatch became black and rotten upon its roof; the chimneys sloped to opposite points; the windows were less neat, and ultimately, when broken, were patched with a couple of leaves from the children's blotted copy-books. His out-houses also began to fail. The neatness of his little farm-yard, and the cleanliness which marked so conspicuously the space fronting his dwelling-house, disappeared in the course of time. Filth began to accumulate where no filth had been; his garden was not now planted so early, nor with such taste and neatness as before; his crops were later, and less

abundant; his haggarts neither so full nor so trim as they were wont to be, nor his ditches and enclosures kept in such good repair. His cars, ploughs, and other farming implements, instead of being put under cover, were left exposed to the influence of wind and weather, where they soon became crazy and useless.

Such, however, were only the slighter symptoms of his bootless struggle against the general embarrassment into which the agricultural interests were, year after year, so unhappily sinking.

Had the tendency to general distress among the class to which he belonged become stationary, Owen would have continued by toil and incessant exertion to maintain his ground; but, unfortunately, there was no point at which the national depression could then stop. Year after year produced deeper, more extensive, and more complicated misery; and when he hoped that every succeeding season would bring an improvement in the market, he was destined to experience not merely a fresh disappointment, but an unexpected depreciation in the price of his corn, butter, and other disposable commodities.

When a nation is reduced to such a state, no eye but that of God himself can see the appalling wretchedness to which a year of disease and scarcity strikes down the working classes.

Owen, after a long and noble contest for nearly three years, sank, at length, under the united calamities of disease and scarcity. The father of the family was laid low upon the bed of sickness, and those of his little ones who escaped it were almost consumed by famine. This two-fold shock sealed his ruin; his honest heart was crushed—his hardy frame shorn of its strength, and he to whom every neighbour fled as to a friend, now required friendship, at a moment when the wide-spread poverty of the country rendered its assistance hopeless.

On rising from his bed of sickness, the prospect before him required his utmost fortitude to bear. He was now wasted in energy both of mind and body,

reduced to utter poverty, with a large family of children, too young to assist him, without means of retrieving his circumstances, his wife and himself gaunt skeletons, his farm neglected, his house wrecked, and his offices falling to ruin, yet every day bringing the half year's term nearer! Oh, ye who write on the miseries of such men—ye who roll round the easy circle of fashionable life, think upon this picture! Ye vile and heartless landlords, who see not, hear not, know not those to whose heart-breaking toil ye owe the only merit ye possess—that of rank in society—come and contemplate this virtuous man, as unfriended, unassisted, and uncheered by those who are bound by a strong moral duty to protect and aid him, he looks shuddering into the dark cheerless future! It is to be wondered at that he, and such as he, should, in the misery of his despair, join the nightly meetings, be lured to associate himself with the incendiary or seduced to grasp, in the stupid apathy of wretchedness, the weapon of the murderer? By neglecting the people, by draining them, with merciless rapacity, of the means of life; by goading them on under a cruel system of rack rents, ye become not their natural benefactor, but curses and scourges, nearly as much in reality as ye are in their opinions.

When Owen rose, he was driven by hunger, direct and immediate, to sell his best cow; and having purchased some oatmeal at an enormous price, from a well-known devotee in the parish, who hoarded up this commodity for a "dear summer," he laid his plans for the future, with as much judgment as any man can display. One morning after breakfast he addressed his wife as follows:

"Kathleen, mavourneen, I want to consult wid you about what we ought to do; things are low wid us, asthore; and except our heavenly Father puts it into the heart of them I'm goin' to mention, I don't know what we'll do, nor what'll become of these poor crathurs that's naked and hungry about us. God pity them, they don't know——and maybe that same's

a comfort—the hardships that's before them. Poor crathurs! see how quiet and sorrowful they sit about their little play, passin' the time for themselves as well as they can! Alley, acushla, machree, come over to me. Your hair is bright and fair, Alley, and curls so purtily that the finest lady in the land might envy it; but, acushla, your colour's gone, your little hands are wasted away, too; that sickness was hard and sore upon you, a *colleen machree*,* and he that 'ud spend his heart's blood for you, darlin', can do nothin' to help you!"

He looked at the child as he spoke, and a slight motion in the muscles of his face was barely perceptible, but it passed away; and, after kissing her, he proceeded:—

"Ay, ye crathurs—you and I, Kathleen, could earn our bread for ourselves yet, but these can't do it. This last stroke, darlin', has laid us at the door of both poverty and sickness, but blessed be the mother of heaven for it, they are all left wid us; and sure that's a blessin' we've to be thankful for—glory be to God!"

"Ay, poor things, it's well to have them spared, Owen dear; sure I'd rather a thousand times beg from door to door, and have my childher to look at, than be in comfort widout them."

"Beg: that 'ud go hard wid me, Kathleen. I'd work—I'd live on next to nothing all the year round: but to see the crathurs that wor dacently bred up brought to *that*, I couldn't bear it, Kathleen—'twould break the heart widin in me. Poor as they are, they have the blood of kings in their veins; and, besides, to see a M'Carthy beggin' his bread in the counthry where his name was once great—The M'Carthy More, that was their title—no, acushla; I love them as I do the blood in my own veins; but I'd rather see them in the arms of God in heaven, laid down dacently, with their little sorrowful faces washed, and their

* Girl of my heart.

little bodies stretched out purtily before my eyes—I would—in the grave-yard there beyant, where all belonging to me lie, than have it cast up to them, or have it said, that ever a M'Carthy was seen beggin' on the highway."

"But, Owen, can you strike out no plan for us that ud' put us in the way of comin' round agin? These poor ones, if we could hould out for two or three year, would soon be able to help us."

"They would—they would. I'm thinkin' this day or two of a plan: but I'm doubtful whether it 'ud come to anything."

"What is it, acushla? Sure we can't be worse nor we are, any way."

"I'm goin' to go to Dublin. I'm tould that the landlord's come home from France, and that he's there now; and if I didn't see him, sure I could see the agent. Now, Kathleen, my intention ud' be to lay our case before the head landlord himself, in hopes he might hould back his hand, and spare us for a while. If I had a line from the agent, or a scrape of a pen, that I could show at home to some of the nabours, who knows but I could borry what 'ud set us up agin! I think many of them 'ud be sorry to see me turned out; eh, Kathleen?"

The Irish are an imaginative people; indeed too much so, for either their individual or national happiness. And it is this and superstition, which also depends much upon imagination, that makes them so easily influenced by those extravagant dreams that are held out to them by persons who understand their character.

When Kathleen heard the plan on which Owen founded his expectations of assistance, her dark melancholy eye flashed with a portion of its former fire; a transient vivacity lit up her sickly features, and she turned a smile of hope and affection upon her children, then upon Owen.

"Arrah, thin, who knows, indeed!—who knows but he might do something for us? And maybe we might

be as well as ever yet! May the Lord put it into his heart, this day! I declare, ay!—maybe it was God put it into your heart, Owen!"

"I'll set off," replied her husband, who was a man of decision; "I'll set off on other morrow morning; and as nobody knows anything about it, so let there be not a word said upon the subject, good or bad. If I have success, well and good; but if not, why nobody need be the wiser."

The heart-broken wife evinced, for the remainder of the day, a lightness of spirits which she had not felt for many a month before. Even Owen was less depressed than usual, and employed himself in making such arrangements as he knew would occasion his family to feel the inconvenience of his absence less acutely. But as the hour of his departure drew nigh, a sorrowful feeling of affection rising into greater strength and tenderness, threw a melancholy gloom around his hearth. According to their simple view of distance, a journey to Dublin was a serious undertaking, and to them it was such. Owen was in weak health, just risen out of illness, and what was more trying than any other consideration was, that since their marriage they had never been separated before.

On the morning of his departure he was up before daybreak, and so were his wife and children, for the latter had heard the conversation already detailed between them, and, with their simple-minded parents, enjoyed the gleam of hope which it presented; but this soon changed—when he was preparing to go, an indefinite sense of fear, and a more vivid clinging of affection marked their feeling. He himself partook of this, and was silent, depressed, and less ardent than when the speculation first presented itself to his mind. His resolution, however, was taken, and should he fail, no blame at a future time could be attached to himself. It was the last effort; and to neglect it, he thought, would have been to neglect his duty. When breakfast was ready, they all sat down in silence; the hour was yet early, and a rushlight was placed in a

wooden candlestick that stood beside them to afford light. There was something solemn and touching in the group as they sat in dim relief, every face marked by the traces of sickness, want, sorrow, and affection. The father attempted to eat, but could not; Kathleen sat at the meal, but could taste nothing; the children ate, for hunger at the moment was predominant over every other sensation. At length it was over, and Owen rose to depart; he stood for a minute on the floor, and seemed to take a survey of his cold, cheerless house, and then of his family; he cleared his throat several times, but did not speak.

"Kathleen," said he, at length, "in the name of God I'll go; and may his blessin' be about you, asthore machree, and guard you and these darlins till I come back to yez."

Kathleen's faithful heart could bear no more; she laid herself on his bosom—clung to his neck, and, as the parting kiss was given, she wept aloud, and Owen's tears fell silently down his worn cheeks. The children crowded about them in loud wailings, and the grief of this virtuous and afflicted family was of that profound description, which is ever the companion, in such scenes, of pure and genuine love.

"Owen!" she exclaimed: "Owen, *a-suilish mahuil agus machree!** I doubt we wor wrong in thinkin' of this journey. How can you, mavourneen, walk all the way to Dublin, and you so worn and weakly wid that sickness, and the bad feedin' both before and since? Och, give it up, achree, and stay wid us, let what will happen. You're not able for sich a journey, indeed you're not. Stay wid me and the childer, Owen; sure we'd be so lonesome widout you—will you, agrah? and the Lord will do for us some other way, maybe."

Owen pressed his faithful wife to his heart, and kissed her chaste lips with a tenderness which the heartless votaries of fashionable life can never know.

"Kathleen, asthore," he replied, in those terms of

* Light of my eyes and of my heart.

endearment which flow so tenderly through the language of the people; "sure, whin I remimber your fair young face—your yellow hair, and the light that was in your eyes, acushla machree—but that's gone long ago—och, don't ax me to stop. Isn't your lightsome laugh, whin you wor young, in my ears? and your step that 'ud not bend the flower of the field—Kathleen, I can't, indeed I can't, bear to think of what you wor, nor of what you are now, when, in the coorse of age and natur, but a small change ought to be upon you! Sure I ought to make every struggle to take you and these sorrowful crathurs out of the state you're in."

The children flocked about them, and joined their entreaties to those of their mother. "Father, don't lave us—we 'll be lonesome if you go, and if my mother 'ud get unwell, who 'ud be to take care of her? Father, don't lave your own "weeny crathurs,' (a pet name he had for them)—maybe the meal 'ud be eat out before you'd come back; or maybe something 'ud happen you in that strange place."

"Indeed, there's truth in what they say, Owen," said the wife; "do be said by your own Kathleen for this time, and don't take sich a long journey upon you. Afther all, maybe, you wouldn't see him—sure the naburs will help us, if you could only humble yourself to ax them!"

"Kathleen," said Owen, "when this is past you 'll be glad I went—indeed you will; sure it's only the tindher feelin' of your hearts, darlins. Who knows what the landlord may do when I see himself, and show him these resates—every penny paid him by our own family. Let me go, acushla; it *does* cut me to the heart to lave yez the way yez are in, even for a while; but it's far worse to see your poor wasted faces, widout havin' it in my power to do anything for yez."

He then kissed them again, one by one; and pressing the affectionate partner of his sorrows to his breaking heart, he bade God bless them, and set out

in the twilight of a bitter March morning. He had not gone many yards from the door when little Alley ran after him in tears; he felt her hand upon the skirts of his coat, which she plucked with a smile of affection that neither tears nor sorrow could repress. "Father, kiss *me* again," said she. He stooped down and kissed her tenderly. The child then ascended a green ditch, and Owen, as he looked back, saw her standing upon it; her fair tresses were tossed by the blast about her face, as with straining eyes she watched him receding from her view. Kathleen and the other children stood at the door, and also with deep sorrow watched his form, until the angle of the bridle-road rendered him no longer visible; after which they returned slowly to the fire and wept bitterly.

We believe no men are capable of bearing greater toil or privation than the Irish. Owen's *viaticum* was only two or three oaten cakes tied in a little handkerchief, and a few shillings in silver to pay for his bed. With this small stock of food and money, an oaken stick in his hand, and his wife's kerchief tied about his waist, he undertook a journey of one hundred and ten miles, in quest of a landlord who, so far from being acquainted with the distresses of his tenantry, scarcely knew even their names, and not one of them in person.

Our scene now changes to the metropolis.

One evening, about half-past six o'clock, a toil-worn man turned his steps to a splendid mansion in Mountjoy Square; his appearance was drooping, fatigued, and feeble. As he went along, he examined the numbers on the respective doors, until he reached a certain *one*—before which he stopped for a moment; he then stepped out upon the street, and looked through the windows, as if willing to ascertain whether there was any chance of his object being attained. Whilst in this situation a carriage rolled rapidly up, and stopped with a sudden check that nearly threw back the horses on their haunches. In an instant the thundering knock of the servant intimated the arrival of some person of rank; the hall door was opened, and Owen,

availing himself of that opportunity, entered the hall. Such a visitor, however, was too remarkable to escape notice. The hand of the menial was rudely placed against his breast; and, as the usual impertinent interrogatories were put to him, the pampered ruffian kept pushing him back, until the afflicted man stood upon the upper step leading to the door.

"For the sake of God, let me spake but two words to him. I'm his tenant; and I know he's too much of a jintleman to turn away a man that has lived upon his honor's estate, father and son, for upwards of three hundre years. My name's Owen———"

"You can't see him, my good fellow, at this hour. Go to Mr. M———, his Agent: we have company to dinner. He never speaks to a tenant on business; his Agent manages all that. Please, leave the way, here's more company."

As he uttered the last word, he pushed Owen back; who, forgetting that the stairs were behind him, fell, received a severe cut, and was so completely stunned, that he lay senseless and bleeding. Another carriage drove up, as the fellow, now much alarmed, attempted to raise him from the steps; and, by order of the gentleman who came in it, he was brought into the hall. The circumstance now made some noise. It was whispered about that one of Mr. S———' tenants, a drunken fellow from the country, wanted to break in forcibly to see him; but then it was also asserted, that his skull was broken, and that he lay dead in the hall. Several of the gentlemen above stairs, on hearing that a man had been killed, immediately assembled about him, and, by the means of restoratives, he soon recovered, though the blood streamed copiously from the wound in the back of his head.

"Who are you, my good man?" said Mr. S——

Owen looked about him rather vacantly; but soon collected himself, and replied in a mournful and touching tone of voice—"I'm one of your honor's tenants from Tubber Derg; my name is Owen M'Carthy, your honor—that is, if you be Mr. S——"

"And, pray, what brought you to town, M'Carthy?"

"I wanted to make an humble appale to your honor's feelins, in regard to my bit of farm. I, and my poor family, your honor, have been broken down by hard times and the sickness of the sason—God knows how *they* are."

"If you wish to speak to me about that, my good man, you must know I refer all these matters to my Agent. Go to him—he knows them best; and whatever is right and proper to be done for you, he will do it. Sinclair, give him a crown, and send him to the ——— Dispensary, to get his head dressed. I say, Carthy, go to my Agent; he knows whether your claim is just or not, and will attend to it accordingly."

"Plase your honor, I've been wid him, and he says he can do nothin' whatsomever for me. I went two or three times, and couldn't see him, he was so busy; and, when I did get a word or two wid him, he tould me there was more offered for my land than I'm payin'; and that if I did not pay up, I must be put out, God help me!"

"But I tell you, Carthy, I never interfere between him and my tenants."

"Och, indeed! and it would be well for both your honor's tenants and yourself, if you did, Sir. Your honor ought to know Sir, more about us, and how we're thrated. I'm an honest man, Sir, and I tell you so for your good."

"And pray, Sir," said the Agent, stepping forward, for he had arrived a few minutes before and heard the last observation of M'Carthy—"pray how are they treated, you that know so well, and are so honest a man?—As for honesty, you might have referred to me for that, I think," he added.

"Mr. M——," said Owen, "we're thrated very badly. Sir, you needn't look at me, for I'm not afeerd to spake the thruth; no bullyin', Sir, will make me say anything in your favour that you don't desarve. You've broken the half of them by severity; you've turned the tenants against yourself

and his honor here; and I tell you now, though you're to the fore, that, in the coorse of a short time, there'll be bad work upon the estate, except his honor, here, looks into his own affairs, and hears the complaints of the people. Look at these resates, yer honor; they'll show you, Sir,——"

"Carthy, I can hear no such language against the gentleman to whom I entrust the management of my property; of course, I refer the matter solely to him. I can do nothing in it."

"Kathleen, avourneen!" exclaimed the poor man, as he looked up despairingly to heaven; "and ye, poor darlins of my heart! is this the news I'm to have for yez whin I go home?—As you hope for mercy, Sir, don't turn your ear away from my petition, that I'd humbly make to *yourself*. Cowld, and hunger, and hardship, are at home before me, yer honor. If you'd be plased to look at these resates, you'd see that I always paid my rint; and 'twas sickness and the hard times——"

"And your own honesty, industry, and good conduct," said the Agent, giving a dark and malignant sneer at him. "Carthy, it shall be my business to see that you do not spread a bad spirit through the tenantry much longer.—Sir, you have heard the fellow's admission. It is an implied threat that he will give us much serious trouble. There is not such another incendiary on your property—not one, upon my honour."

"Sir," said a servant, "dinner is on the table."

"Sinclair," said his landlord, "give him another crown, and tell him to trouble me no more." Saying which, he and the Agent went up to the drawing-room, and, in a moment, Owen saw a large party sweep down stairs, full of glee and vivacity, by whom both himself and his distresses were as completely forgotten as if they had never existed.

He now slowly departed, aud knew not whether the house-steward had given him money or not until he felt it in his hand. A cold, sorrowful weight lay upon

his heart; the din of the town deadened his affliction into a stupor; but an overwhelming sense of his disappointment, and a conviction of the agent's diabolical falsehood, entered like barbed arrows into his heart.

On leaving the steps, he looked up to heaven in the distraction of his agonising thoughts; the clouds were black and lowering—the wind stormy—and, as it carried them on its dark wing along the sky, he wished, if it were the will of God, that his head lay in the quiet grave-yard where the ashes of his forefathers reposed in peace. But he again remembered his Kathleen and their children; and the large tears of anguish, deep and bitter, rolled slowly down his cheeks.

We will not trace him into an hospital, whither the wound on his head occasioned him to be sent, but simply state, that, on the second week after this a man, with his head bound in a handkerchief, lame, bent, and evidently labouring under severe illness or great affliction, might be seen toiling slowly up the little hill that commanded a view of Tubber Derg. On reaching the top he sat down to rest for a few minutes, but his eye was eagerly turned to the house which contained all that was dear to him on this earth. The sun was setting, and shone, with half his disk visible, in that dim and cheerless splendour which produces almost in every temperament a feeling of melancholy. His house which, in happier days, formed so beautiful and conspicuous an object in the view, was now, from the darkness of its walls, scarcely discernible. The position of the sun, too, rendered it more difficult to be seen; and Owen, for it was he, shaded his eyes with his hand, to survey it more distinctly. Many a harrowing thought and remembrance passed through his mind, as his eye traced its dim outline in the fading light. He had done his duty—he had gone to the fountain head, with a hope that his simple story of affliction might be heard; but all was fruitless: the only gleam of hope that opened

upon their misery had now passed into darkness and despair for ever. He pressed his aching forehead with distraction as he thought of this; then clasped his hands bitterly, and groaned aloud.

At length he rose, and proceeded with great difficulty, for the short rest had stiffened his weak and fatigued joints. As he approached home his heart sank; and as he ascended the blood-red stream which covered the bridle-way that led to his house, what with fatigue and affliction, his agitation weakened him so much that he stopped, and leaned on his staff several times, that he might take breath.

"It's too dark maybe for them to see me, or poor Kathleen would send the darlins to give me the *she dha veha.** Kathleen, avourneen machree! how my heart beats wid longin' to see you, asthore, and to see the weeny crathurs—glory be to Him that has left *them* to me—praise and glory to His name!"

He was now within a few perches of the door; but a sudden misgiving shot across his heart when he saw it shut, and no appearance of smoke from the chimney, nor of stir or life about the house. He advanced—

"Mother of glory, what's this! But, wait, let me rap agin, Kathleen, Kathleen!—are you widin, avourneen? Owen—Alley—arn't ye widin, childhre? Alley, sure I'm come back to you all!" and he rapped more loudly than before. A dark breeze swept through the bushes as he spoke, but no voice nor sound proceeded from the house;—all was still as death within.

"Alley!" he called once more to his little favourite; "I'm come home wid something for *you*, asthore! I didn't forget *you*, alanna!—I brought it from Dublin all the way. Alley!" but the gloomy murmur of the blast was the only reply.

Perhaps the most intense of all that he knew as misery was that which he then felt; but this state of suspense was soon terminated by the appearance of a neighbour who was passing.

* The welcome.

"Why, thin, Owen, but yer welcome home agin, my poor fellow; and I'm sorry that I haven't betther news for you, and so are all of us."

He whom he addressed had almost lost the power of speech:—

"Frank," said he, and he wrung his hand. "What—what? was death among them? For the sake of heaven, spake!"

The severe pressure which he received in return ran like a shock of paralysis to his heart. "Owen, you must be a man; every one pities yez, and may the Almighty pity and support yez! She is, indeed, Owen, gone; the weeny fair-haired child, your favourite Alley, is gone. Yesterday she was berrid; and dacently the nabours attinded the place, and sent in as far as they had it, both mate and dhrink to Kathleen and the other ones. Now, Owen, you've heard it; trust in God, an' be a man."

A deep and convulsive throe shook him to the heart. "Gone!—the fair-haired one!—Alley!—Alley!—the pride of both our hearts; the sweet, the quiet, and the sorrowful child, that seldom played wid the rest, but kept wid mys——! Oh, my darlin', my darlin'! gone from my eyes for ever!—God of glory! won't you support me this night of sorrow and misery!" With a sudden yet profound sense of humility, he dropped on his knees at the threshold, and, as the tears rolled down his convulsed cheeks, exclaimed, in a burst of sublime piety, not at all uncommon among our peasantry—"I thank you, O my God! I thank you, an' I put myself an' my weeny ones, my *pastchee boght*, † into your hands. I thank you, O God for what has happened! Keep me up and support me—och, I want it! You loved the weeny one, and you took her; she was the light of my eyes, and the pulse of my broken heart, but you took her, blessed Father of heaven! an' we can't be angry wid you for so doin'! Still if you had spared

† My poor children.

her—if—if—O, blessed Father, my heart was in the *very* one you took—but I thank you, O God! May she rest in pace, now and for ever, Amin!"

He then rose up, and slowly wiping the tears from his eyes, departed.

"Let me hould your arm, Frank, dear," said he, "I 'm weak and tired wid a long journey. Och, an' can it be that she's gone—the fair-haired colleen! When I was lavin' home, an' had kissed them all—'twas the first time we ever parted, Kathleen and I, since our marriage—the blessed child came over an' held up her mouth, sayin', 'Kiss *me* agin, father;' an' this was afther herself an' all of them had kissed me afore. But, och! oh! blessed Mother! Frank, where's my Kathleen and the rest?—and why are they out of their own poor place?"

"Owen, I tould you a while agone, that you must be a man. I gave you the worst news first, an what's to come doesn't signify much. It was too dear; for if any man could live upon it you could:—you have neither house nor home, Owen, nor land. An ordher came from the Agint; your last cow was taken, so was all you had in the world—hem—barrin' a thrifle. No,—bad manners to it! no,—you're not widout *a home*, anyway. The family's in my barn, brave and comfortable, compared to what your own house was, that let in the wather through the roof like a sieve; and, while the same barn's to the fore, never say you want a home."

"God bless you, Frank, for that goodness to them and me; if you're not rewarded for it here, you will in a betther place. Och, I long to see Kathleen and the childher! But I'm fairly broken down, Frank, and hardly able to mark the ground; and, indeed, no wondher, if you knew but all: still, let God's will be done! Poor Kathleen, I must bear up afore her, or she 'll break her heart; for I know how she loved the goolden-haired darlin' that 's gone from us. Och, and how did she go, Frank, for I left her betther?"

"Why, the poor girsha took a relapse, and wasn't

strong enough to bear up aginst the last attack; but it's one comfort that you know she 's happy."

Owen stood for a moment, and, looking solemnly in his neighbour's face, exclaimed, in a deep and exhausted voice, "Frank!"

"What are you goin' to say, Owen?"

"The heart widin in me 's broke—broke!"

The large tears rolled down his weather-beaten cheeks, and he proceeded in silence to the house of his friend. There was, however, a feeling of sorrow in his words and manner which Frank could not withstand. He grasped Owen's hand, and, in a low and broken voice, simply said—"Keep your spirits up—keep them up."

When they came to the barn in which his helpless family had taken up their temporary residence, Owen stood for a moment to collect himself; but he was nervous, and trembled with repressed emotion. They then entered; and Kathleen, on seeing her beloved and affectionate husband, threw herself on his bosom, and for some time felt neither joy nor sorrow—she had swooned. The poor man embraced her with a tenderness at once mournful and deep. The children, on seeing their father safely returned, forgot their recent grief, and clung about him with gladness and delight. In the meantime Kathleen recovered, and Owen for many minutes could not check the loud and clamorous grief, now revived by the presence of her husband, with which the heart-broken and emaciated mother deplored her departed child; and Owen himself, on once more looking among the little ones, on seeing her little frock hanging up, and her stool vacant by the fire—on missing her voice and her blue laughing eyes —and remembering the affectionate manner in which, as with a presentiment of death, she held up her little mouth and offered him the last kiss—he slowly pulled the toys and cakes he had purchased for her out of his pocket, surveyed them for a moment, and then, putting his hands on his face, bent his head upon his bosom, and wept with the vehement outpouring of a father's sorrow

The reader perceives that he was a meek man; that his passions were not dark nor violent; he bore no revenge to those who neglected or injured him, and in this he differed from too many of his countrymen. No; his spirit was broken down with sorrow, and had not room for the fiercer and more destructive passions. His case excited general pity. Whatever his neighbours could do to soothe him and alleviate his affliction was done. His farm was not taken; for fearful threats were held out against those who might venture to occupy it. In these threats he had nothing to do; on the contrary, he strongly deprecated them. Their existence, however, was deemed by the agent sufficient to justify him in his callous and malignant severity towards him.

We did not write this story for effect. Our object was to relate facts that occurred. In Ireland there is much blame justly attached to landlords for their neglect and severity, in such depressed times, towards their tenants: there is also much that is not only indefensible but atrocious on the part of the tenants. But can the landed proprietors of Ireland plead ignorance or want of education for their neglect and rapacity, whilst the crimes of the tenants, on the contrary, may in general be ascribed to both? He who lives—as, perhaps, his forefathers have done—upon any man's property, and fails from unavoidable calamity, has as just and clear a right to assistance from the landlord as if the amount of that aid were a bonded debt. Common policy, common sense, and common justice, should induce the Irish landlords to lower their rents according to the market for agricultural produce, otherwise poverty, famine, crime, and vague political speculations, founded upon idle hopes of a general transfer of property, will spread over and convulse the kingdom. Any man who looks into our poverty, may see that our landlords ought to reduce their rents to a standard suitable to the times, and to the ability of the tenant.

But to return. Owen, for another year, struggled

on for his family, without success; his firm spirit *was* broken; employment he could not get, and even had it been regular, he would have found it impracticable to support his helpless wife and children by his labour. The next year unhappily was also one of sickness and of want; the country was not only a wide waste of poverty, but overspread with typhus fever. One Saturday night he and the family found themselves without food; they had not tasted a morsel for twenty-four hours. There were murmuring and tears, and, finally, a low conversation among them, as if they held a conference upon some subject which filled them with both grief and satisfaction. In this alternation of feeling did they pass the time until the sharp gnawing of hunger was relieved by sleep. A keen December wind blew with a bitter blast on the following morning; the rain was borne along upon it with violence, and the cold was chill and piercing. Owen, his wife, and their six children, issued at daybreak out of the barn in which, ever since their removal from Tubber Derg, they had lived until then; their miserable fragments of bed-clothes were tied in a bundle to keep them dry; their pace was slow, need we say sorrowful; all were in tears. Owen and Kathleen went first, with a child upon the back, and another in the hand of each. Their route lay by their former dwelling, the door of which was open, for it had not been inhabited. On passing it they stood for a moment; then with a simultaneous impulse both approached—entered—and took one last look of a spot to which their hearts clung with enduring attachment. They then returned; and as they passed, Owen put forth his hand, picked a few small pebbles out of the wall, and put them in his pocket.

"Farewell!" said he, "and may the blessin' of God rest upon you! We now lave you for ever! We're goin' at last to beg our bread through the world wide, where none will know of the happy days we passed widin your walls! We *must* lave you; but glory be to the Almighty, we are goin' wid a clear conscience;

we took no revenge into our own hands, but left everything to God above us. We are poor, but there is neither blood, nor murder, nor dishonesty upon our heads. Don't cry, Kathleen—don't cry, childher; there is still a good God above, who can and may do something for us *yet*, glory be to his holy name!"

He then passed on with his family, which, including himself, made, in all, eight paupers, being an additional burden upon the country, which might easily have been avoided. His land was about two years waste, and when it was ultimately taken, the house was a ruin, and the money allowed by the landlord for building a new one, together with the loss of two years' rent, would, if humanely directed, have enabled Owen M'Carthy to remain a solvent tenant.

When an Irish peasant is reduced to pauperism, he seldom commences the melancholy task of soliciting alms in his native place. The trial is always a severe one, and he is anxious to hide his shame and misery from the eyes of those who know him. This is one reason why some system of poor laws should be introduced into the country. Paupers of this description become a burden upon strangers, whilst those who are capable of entering with friendly sympathy into their misfortunes have no opportunity of assisting them. Indeed this shame of seeking alms from those who have known the mendicant in better days, is a proof that the absence of poor laws takes away from the poorer classes one of the strongest incitements to industry; for instance, if every pauper in Ireland were confined to his own parish, and compelled to beg from his acquaintances, the sense of shame alone would, by stirring them up to greater industry, reduce the number of mendicants one half. There is a strong spirit of family pride in Ireland, which would be sufficient to make many poor, of both sexes, exert themselves to the uttermost rather than cast a stain upon their name, or bring a blush to the face of their relations. But now it is not so; the mendicant sets out to beg, and, in most instances, commences his new

mode of life in some distant part of the country, where his name and family are not known.

Indeed it is astonishing how any man can, for a moment, hesitate to form his opinion upon the subject of poor laws. The English and Scotch gentry know something about the middle and lower classes of their respective countries, and, of course, they have a fixed system of provision for the poor in each. The ignorance of the Irish gentry, upon almost every subject connected with the real good of the people, is only in keeping with their ignorance of the people themselves. It is to be feared, however, that their disinclination to introduce poor laws arises less from actual ignorance, than from an illiberal selfishness. The facts of the case are these :—In Ireland the whole support of the inconceivable multitude of paupers, who swarm like locusts over the surface of the country, rests upon the middle and lower classes, or rather upon the latter, for there is scarcely such a thing in this unhappy country as a middle class. In not one out of a thousand instances do the gentry contribute to the mendicant poor. In the first place, a vast proportion of our landlords are absentees, who squander upon their own pleasures or vices, in the theatres, saloons, or gaming-houses of France, or in the softer profligacies of Italy, that which ought to return in some shape to stand in the place of duties so shamefully neglected. These persons contribute nothing to the poor, except the various evils which their absence entails upon them.

On the other hand, the *resident* gentry never, in any case, assist a beggar, even in the remote parts of the country, where there are no Mendicity Institutions. Nor do the beggars ever think of applying to them. They know that his Honor's dogs would be slipped at them; or that the whip might be laid, perhaps, to the shoulders of a broken-hearted father, with his brood of helpless children wanting food; perhaps, upon the emaciated person of a miserable widow, who begs for her orphans, only because the hands that supported,

and would have defended both her and them, are mouldered into dust.

Upon the middle and lower classes, therefore, comes *directly* the heavy burden of supporting the great mass of pauperism that presses upon Ireland. It is certain that the Irish landlords know this, and that they are reluctant to see any law enacted which might make the performance of their duties to the poor compulsory. This, indeed, is natural in men who have so inhumanly neglected them.

But what must the state of a country be where those who are on the way to pauperism themselves are exclusively burdened with the support of the vagrant poor? It is like putting additional weight on a man already sinking under the burden he bears. The landlords suppose, that because the maintenance of the idle who are able, and of the aged and infirm who are not able to work, comes upon the renters of land, they themselves are exempted from their support. This, if true, is as bitter a stigma upon their humanity as upon their sense of justice; but it is *not* true. Though the cost of supporting such an incredible number of the idle and helpless does, in the first place, fall upon the tenant, yet; by diminishing his means, and by often compelling him to purchase, towards the end of the season, a portion of food equal to that which he has given away in charity, it certainly becomes ultimately a clear deduction from the landlord's rent. In either case it is a deduction, but in the latter it is often doubly so; inasmuch as the poor tenants must frequently pay, at the close of a season, double, perhaps treble, the price which provision brought at the beginning of it.

Any person conversant with the Irish people must frequently have heard such dialogues as the following, during the application of a beggar for alms:—

Mendicant.—"We're axin your charity, for God's sake!"

Poor Tenant.—"Why thin for His sake you would get, poor crathur, if we had it; but it's not for you

widin the four corners of the house. It 'ud be well for us if we had *now* all we gave away in charity *durin' the whole year*; we wouldn't have to be buyin' for ourselves at three prices. Why don't you go up to the Big House? *They're* rich and can afford it."

Mendicant, with a shrug, which sets all his coats and bags in motion—"Och! och! The Big House, inagh! Musha, do you want me, an' the childhre here, to be torn to pieces with the dogs? or lashed wid a whip by one o' the sarvints? No, no, avourneen!" (with a hopeless shake of the head.) "That 'ud be a blue look-up, like a clear evenin'."

Poor Tenant.—"Then, indeed, we haven't it to help you, now, poor man. We're buyin' ourselves."

Mendicant.—"Thin, throth, that's lucky, so it is! I've as purty a grain o' male here, as you'd wish to thicken water wid that I sthruv to get together, in hopes to be able to buy a quarter o' tobaccy, along wid a pair o' new bades an' a scapular for myself. I'm suspicious that there's about a stone ov it altogether. You can have it anunder the market price, for I'm frettin' at not havin' the scapular an' me. Sure the Lord will send me an' the childhre a bit an' sup some way else—glory to his name!—besides a lock o' praties in the corner o' the bag here, that'll do us for this day, any way."

The bargain is immediately struck, and the poor tenant is glad to purchase, even from a beggar, his stone of meal, in consequence of getting it a few pence under market price. Such scenes as this, which are of frequent occurrence in the country parts of Ireland, need no comment

This, certainly, is not a state of things which should be permitted to exist. Every man ought to be compelled to support the poor of his native parish according to his means. It is an indelible disgrace to the legislature so long to have neglected the paupers of Ireland. Is it to be thought of with common patience that a person rolling in wealth shall feed upon his turtle, his venison, and his costly luxuries of

every description, for which he will not scruple to pay the highest price—that this heartless and selfish man, whether he reside at home or abroad, shall thus unconscionably pamper himself with viands purchased by the toil of the people, and yet not contribute to assist them, when poverty, sickness, or age, throws them upon the scanty support of casual charity!

Shall this man be permitted to batten in luxury in a foreign land, or at home; to whip our paupers from his carriage; or hunt them, like beasts of prey, from his grounds, whilst the lower classes—the gradually decaying poor—are compelled to groan under the burthen of their support in addition to their other burthens? Surely it is not a question which admits of argument. This subject has been darkened and made difficult by fine-spun and unintelligible theories, when the only knowledge necessary to understand it may be gained by spending a few weeks in some poor village in the interior of the country. As for Parliamentary Committees upon this or any other subject, they are, with reverence be it spoken, thoroughly contemptible. They will summon and examine witnesses who, for the most part, know little about the habits or distresses of the poor; public money will be wasted in defraying their expenses and in printing reports; resolutions will be passed; something will be said about it in the House of Commons; and, in a few weeks, after resolving and re-resolving, it is as little thought of, as if it had never been the subject of investigation. In the mean time the evil proceeds—becomes more inveterate—eats into the already declining prosperity of the country—whilst those who suffer under it have the consolation of knowing that a Parliamentary Committee sat longer upon it than so many geese upon their eggs, but hatched nothing. Two circumstances, connected with pauperism in Ireland, are worthy of notice. The first is this—the Roman Catholics, who certainly constitute the bulk of the population, feel themselves called upon, from the peculiar tenets of their religion, to exercise indiscrimi-

nate charity largely to the begging poor. They act under the impression that eleemosynary good works possess the power of cancelling sin to an extent almost incredible. Many of their religious legends are founded upon this view of the case; and the reader will find an appropriate one in the Priest's sermon, as given in our tale of the "Poor Scholar." That legend is one which the author has many a time heard from the lips of the people, by whom it was implicitly believed. A man who may have committed a murder over night, will the next day endeavour to wipe away his guilt by alms given for the purpose of getting the benefit of "the poor man's prayer." The principle of assisting our distressed fellow-creatures, when rationally exercised, is one of the best in society; but here it becomes entangled with error, superstition, and even with crime—acts as a bounty upon imposture, and in some degree predisposes to guilt, from an erroneous belief that sin may be cancelled by alms and the prayers of mendicant impostors.

The second point, in connection with pauperism, is the immoral influence that proceeds from the relation in which the begging poor in Ireland stand towards the class by whom they are supported. These, as we have already said, are the poorest, least educated, and consequently the most ignorant description of the people. They are, also, the most numerous. There have been for centuries, probably since the Reformation itself, certain opinions floating among the lower classes in Ireland, all tending to prepare them for some great change in their favour, arising from the discomfiture of heresy, the overthrow of their enemies, and the exaltation of themselves and their religion.

Scarcely had the public mind subsided after the Rebellion of Ninety-eight, when the success of Buonaparte directed the eyes and hopes of the Irish people towards *him*, as the person designed to be their deliverer. Many a fine fiction has the author of this

work heard about that great man's escapes, concerning the bullets that conveniently turned aside from his person, and the sabres that civilly declined to cut him down. Many prophecies too were related, in which the glory of this country under his reign was touched off in the happiest colours. Pastorini also gave such notions an impulse. Eighteen twenty-five was to be the year of their deliverance: George the Fourth was never to fill the British throne; and the mill of Lowth was to be turned three times with human blood. "The miller with the two thumbs was then living," said the mendicants, for they were the principal propagators of these opinions, and the great expounders of their own prophecies; so that of course there could be no further doubt upon the subject. Several of them had seen him, a red-haired man with broad shoulders, stout legs, exactly such as a miller ought to have, and two thumbs on his right hand; all precisely as the prophecy had stated. Then there was *Beal-derg*, and several others of the fierce old Milesian chiefs, who, along with their armies, lay in an enchanted sleep, all ready to awake and take a part in the delivery of the country. "Sure such a man," and they would name one in the time of the mendicant's grandfather, "was once going to a fair to sell a horse—well and good; the time was the dawn of morning, a little before daylight: he met a man who undertook to purchase his horse; they agreed upon the price, and the seller of him followed the buyer into a Rath, where he found a range of horses, each with an armed soldier asleep by his side, ready to spring upon him if awoke. The purchaser cautioned the owner of the horse as they were about to enter the subterraneous dwelling, against touching either horse or man; but the countryman happening to stumble, inadvertently laid his hand upon a sleeping soldier, who immediately leaped up, drew his sword, and asked, '*Wuil anam inh?*' 'Is the time in it? Is the time arrived?' To which the horse-dealer of the Rath replied, '*Ha niel. Gho dhee collhow areesht.*' 'No: go to sleep again.' Upon this

the soldier immediately sank down in his former position, and unbroken sleep reigned throughout the cave." The influence on the warm imaginations of an ignorant people, of such fictions concocted by vagrant mendicants, is very pernicious. They fill their minds with the most palpable absurdities, and, what is worse, with opinions, which, besides being injurious to those who receive them, in every instance insure for those who propagate them a cordial and kind reception.

These mendicants consequently pander, for their own selfish ends, to the prejudices of the ignorant, which they nourish and draw out in a manner that has in no slight degree been subversive of the peace of the country. Scarcely any political circumstance occurs which they do not immediately seize upon and twist to their own purposes, or in other words, to the opinions of those from whom they derive their support. When our present police first appeared in their uniforms and black belts, another prophecy, forsooth, was fulfilled. Immediately before the downfall of heresy, a body of "Black Militia" was to appear; the police, then, are the black militia, and the people consider themselves another step nearer the consummation of their vague speculations.

In the year Ninety-eight, the Irish mendicants were active agents, clever spies, and expert messengers on the part of the people; and to this day they carry falsehood, and the materials of outrage in its worst shape, into the bosom of peaceable families, who would, otherwise, never become connected with a system which is calculated to bring ruin and destruction upon those who permit themselves to join it.

This evil, and it is no trifling one, would, by the introduction of poor laws, be utterly abolished; the people would not only be more easily improved, but education, when received, would not be corrupted by the infusion into it of such ingredients as the above. In many other points of view, the confirmed and hackneyed mendicants of Ireland are a great evil to

the morals of the people. We could easily detail them, but such not being our object at present, we will now dismiss the subject of poor laws, and resume our narrative.

Far—far different from this description of impostors, were Owen M'Carthy and his family. Their misfortunes were not the consequences of negligence or misconduct on their own part. They struggled long but unavailingly against high rents and low markets; against neglect on the part of the landlord and his agent; against sickness, famine, and death. They had no alternative but to beg or starve. Owen was willing to work, but he could not procure employment: and provided he could, the miserable sum of sixpence a day, when food was scarce and dear, would not support him, his wife, and six little ones. He became a pauper, therefore, only to avoid starvation.

Heavy and black was his heart, to use the strong expression of the people, on the bitter morning when he set out to encounter the dismal task of seeking alms, in order to keep life in himself and his family. The plan was devised on the preceding night, but to no mortal, except his wife, was it communicated. The honest pride of a man whose mind was above committing a mean action, would not permit him to reveal what he considered the first stain that ever was known to rest upon the name of M'Carthy; he, therefore, sallied out under the beating of the storm, and proceeded, without caring much whither he went, until he got considerably beyond the bounds of his own parish.

In the meantime hunger pressed keenly upon him and them. The day had no appearance of clearing up; the heavy rain and sleet beat into their thin, worn garments, and the clamour of his children for food began to grow more and more importunate. They came to the shelter of a hedge, which inclosed on one side a remote and broken road, along which, in order to avoid the risk of being recognised, they had preferred travelling. Owen stood here for a few minutes

to consult with his wife, as to where and when they should "make a beginning;" but on looking round, he found her in tears.

"Kathleen, asthore," said he, "I can't bid you not to cry; bear up, acushla machree; bear up: sure, as I said, when we came out this mornin', there's a good God above us that can still turn over the good lafe for us, if we put our hopes in him."

"Owen," said his sinking wife, "it's not altogether bekase we're brought to this that I'm cryin'; no, indeed."

"Thin what ails you, Kathleen darlin'?"

The wife hesitated, and evaded the question for some time; but at length, upon his pressing her for an answer, with a fresh gush of sorrow, she replied:

"Owen, since you *must* know—och, may God pity us!—since you must know, it's wid hunger—*wid hunger*! I kept, unknownst, a little bit of bread to give the childhre this mornin', and that was part of it I gave you yesterday early—I'm near two days fastin'."

"Kathleen! Kathleen! Och! sure I know your worth, avillish. You were too good a wife, an' too good a mother, a'most! God forgive me, Kathleen! I fretted about beginnin', dear; but as my Heavenly Father's above me, I'm now happier to beg wid you by my side, nor if I war in the best house in the province widout you! Hould up, avourneen, for a while. Come on, childhre, darlins, an' the first house we meet we'll ax their char——, their assistance. Come on, darlins, and all of yees. Why my heart's asier, so it is. Sure we have your mother, childhre, safe wid us, an' what signifies anything so long as *she's* left to us?"

He then raised his wife tenderly, for she had been compelled to sit from weakness, and they bent their steps to a decent farm-house that stood a few perches off the road, about a quarter of a mile before them.

As they approached the door, the husband hesitated a moment; his face got paler than usual, and his lip quivered as he said—"Kathleen—"

"I know what you're goin' to say, Owen. No acushla, *you* won't; *I'll* ax it myself."

"Do," said Owen, with difficulty; "I can't do it; but I'll overcome my pride afore long, I hope. It's thryin' to me, Kathleen, an' you know it is—for you know how little I ever expected to be brought to this."

"Husht, avillish! We'll thry, then, in the name o' God."

As she spoke, the children, herself, and her husband entered, to beg, for the first time in their lives, a morsel of food. Yes! timidly—with a blush of shame, red even to crimson, upon the pallid features of Kathleen—with grief acute and piercing—they entered the house together.

For some minutes they stood and spoke not. The unhappy woman, unaccustomed to the language of supplication, scarcely knew in what terms to crave assistance. Owen himself stood back, uncovered, his fine, but much changed features, overcast with an expression of deep affliction. Kathleen cast a single glance at him, as if for encouragement. Their eyes met; she saw the upright man—the last remnant of the M'Carthy—himself once the friend of the poor, of the unhappy, of the afflicted—standing crushed and broken down by misfortunes which he had not deserved, waiting with patience for a morsel of charity. Owen, too, had *his* remembrances. He recollected the days when he sought and gained the pure and fond affections of his Kathleen: when beauty, and youth, and innocence encircled her with their light and their grace, as she spoke or moved; he saw her a happy wife and mother in her own home, kind and benevolent to all who required her good word or her good office, and remembered the sweetness of her light-hearted song; but now she was homeless. He remembered, too, how she used to plead with himself for the afflicted. It was but a moment; yet when their eyes met, that moment was crowded by recollections that flashed across their minds with a keen sense of a lot so bitter and wretched as theirs. Kathleen could not speak, although she tried; her sobs denied her utterance; and Owen

involuntarily sat upon a chair, and covered his face with his hand.

To an observing eye it is never difficult to detect the cant of imposture, or to perceive distress when it is real. The good woman of the house, as is usual in Ireland, was in the act of approaching them, unsolicited, with a double handful of meal—that is what the Scotch and northern Irish call a *gowpen*, or as much as both hands locked together can contain—when, noticing their distress, she paused a moment, eyed them more closely, and exclaimed—

"What's this? Why there's something wrong wid you, good people! But first an' foremost take this, in the name an' honour of God."

"May His blessin' rest upon yees!" replied Kathleen. "This is a sorrowful thrial to us; for it's our first day to be upon the world; an' this is the first help of the kind we ever axed for, or ever got; an' indeed now I find we haven't even a place to carry it in. I've no—b—b—cloth, or anything to hould it."

"Your first, is it?" said the good woman. "Your first! May the marciful queen o' heaven look down upon yees, but it's a bitther day yees war driven out in! Sit down, there, you poor crathur. God pity you, I pray this day, for you *have* a heart-broken look! Sit down awhile, near the fire, you an' the childhre! Come over, darlins, an' warm yourselves. Och, oh! but it's a thousand pities to see sich fine childhre—handsome an' good lookin' even as they are, brought to this! Come over, good man; get near the fire, for you're wet an' could all of ye. Brian, *ludher* them two lazy thieves o' dogs out o' that—be off wid yez, ye lazy divils, that's not worth your feedin'! Come over, honest man."

Owen and his family were placed near the fire; the poor man's heart was full, and he sighed heavily.

"May He that is plased to thry us," he exclaimed, "reward you for this! We are," he continued, "a poor an' a sufferin' family; but it's the will of God that we should be so, an' sure we can't complain wid-

out committin' sin. All we ax now, is, that it may be plasin' to him that brought us low, to enable us to bear up undher our thrials. We would take it to our choice to beg an' be honest, sooner nor to be wealthy, an' wicked! We have our failings, an' our sins, God help us; but still there's nothin' dark or heavy on our consciences. Glory be to the name o' God for it!"

"Throth, I believe you," replied the farmer's wife; "there's thruth an' honesty in your face; one may easily see the remains of dacency about you all. Musha, throw your little things aside, an' stay where ye are to-day: you can't bring out the childre under the teem of rain an' sleet that's in it. *Wurrah dheelish*, but it's the bitther day all out. Faix, Paddy will get a dhrookin, so he will, at that weary fair wid the stirks, poor bouchal—a son of ours that's gone to Ballyboulteen to sell some cattle, an' he'll not be worth three hapuns afore he comes back. I hope he'll have sinse to go into some house, when he's done, an' dhry himself well, any how, besides takin' somethin' to keep out the could. Put by your things, an' don't think of goin' out sich a day."

"We thank you," replied Owen. "Indeed we 're glad to stay undher your roof; for, poor things, they're badly able to travel sich a day—these childre."

"Musha, ye ate no breakfast, maybe?"

Owen and his family were silent. The children looked wistfully at their parents, anxious that they should confirm what the good woman surmised; the father looked again at his famished brood and his sinking wife, and nature overcame him.

"Food did not crass our lips this day," replied Owen; an' I may say hardly anything yestherday."

"Oh, blessed mother! Here, Katty Murray, drop scrubbin' that dresser, an' put down the midlin' pot for stirabout. Be quick, woman alive, handle yourself; you might a had it boilin' by this. God presarve us!—to be two days widout atin! Be the hoky, Katty, if you're not alive, I'll give you a douse o' the

churnstaff that'll bring the fire to your eyes! Do you hear me?"

"I do hear you, an' did often feel you, too, for fraid hearin' wouldn't do. You think there's no places in the world but your own, I believe. Faix, indeed! it's well come up wid us, to be randied about wid no less a switch than a churnstaff!"

"Is it givin' back talk, you are? Bad end to me, if you look crucked but I'll lave you a mark to remimber me by. What woman 'ud put up wid you but myself, you shkamin flipe? It wasn't to give me your bad tongue I hired you, but to do your business; an' I tell you, if you turn your tongue on me agin, I'll give you the weight o' the churnstaff. Is it bekase they're poor people that it pleased God to bring to this, that you turn up your nose at doin' anything to sarve them? There's not wather enough there, I say —put in more. What signifies all the stirabout that 'ud make? Put plinty in: it's betther always to have too much than too little. Faix, I tell you, you'll want a male's meat an' a night's lodgin' afore you die, if you don't mend your manners."

"Och, musha, the poor girl is doin' her best," observed Kathleen; "an I'm sure she wouldn't be guilty of usin' pride to the likes of us, or to any one that the Lord has laid his hand upon."

"She had betther not, while I'm to the fore," said her mistress. "What is she herself? Sure if it was a sin to be poor, God help the world. No; it's neither a sin nor a shame."

"Thanks be to God, no," said Owen; "it's neither the one nor the other. So long as we keep a fair name an' a clear conscience, we can't ever say that our case is hard."

After some further conversation a comfortable breakfast was prepared for them, of which they partook with an appetite sharpened by their long abstinence from food. Their stay here was particularly fortunate, for as they were certain of a cordial welcome. and an abundance of that which they much

wanted—wholesome food—the pressure of immediate distress was removed. They had time to think more accurately upon the little preparations for misery which were necessary, and, as the day's leisure was at their disposal, Kathleen's needle and scissors were industriously plied in mending the tattered clothes of her husband and her children, in order to meet the inclemency of the weather.

On the following morning, after another abundant breakfast, and substantial marks of kindness from their entertainers, they prepared to resume their new and melancholy mode of life. As they were about to depart, the farmer's wife addressed them in the following terms—the farmer himself, by the way, being but the shadow of his worthy partner in life—

Wife—"Now, good people, you're takin' the world on your heads——"

Farmer—"Ah, good people, you're takin' the world on your heads——"

Wife—"Hould your tongue, Brian, an' suck your dhudeen. It's me that's spakin' to them, so none of your palaver, if you plase, till I'm done, an' then you may prache till Tib's Eve, an' that's neither before Christmas nor after it."

Farmer—"Sure I'm sayin' nothin', Elveen, barrin' houldin' my tongue, *a shuchar.*"*

Wife—"You're takin' the world on yez, an' God knows 'tis a heavy load to carry, poor crathurs."

Farmer—"A heavy load, poor crathurs! God he knows it's that."

Wife—"Brian! *Gluntho ma*?—did you hear me? You'll be puttin' in your gab, an' me spakin'? How-an-iver, as I was sayin', our house was the first ye came to, an' they say there's a great blessin' to thim that gives the *first* charity to a poor man or woman settin' out to look for their bit."

Farmer—"Throgs, ay! Whin they set out to look for their bit."

Wife—"I tell you again' Brian, you'd vex a saint,

* My sugar

What have you to say in it? Hould your whisht now, an' suck your dhudeen, I say; sure I allow you a quarther o' tobaccy a week, an' what right have you to be puttin' in your ghoster when other people's spakin'?"

Farmer—"Go an."

Wife—"So, you see, the long an' the short of it is, that whenever you happen to be in this side of the counthry, always come to *us*. You know the ould sayin'—when the poor man comes he brings in a blessin', an' when he goes he carries away a curse. You have as much meal as will last yez a day or two; an' God he sees you're heartily welcome to all ye got?"

Wife—"Now, Brian, hould your tongue, or I'll turn you out o' the kitchen. One can't hear their own ears for you, you poor squakin' dhrone. Will you whisht, now?"

Farmer—"Go an. Amn't I dhrawin' my pipe?"

Wife—"Well, dhraw it; but don't dhraw *me* down upon you, barrin ——. Do you hear me? an' the sthrange people to the fore, too! Well, the Lord be wid yez, an' bless yez! But afore yez go, jist lave your blessin' wid us: for it's a good thing to have the blessin' of the poor."

"The Lord bless you, an' yours!" said Owen, fervently. "May you an' them never—oh, may you never—*never* suffer what we've suffered; nor know what it is to want a male's mate, or a night's lodgin'!"

"Amin!" exclaimed Kathleen; "may the world flow upon you! for your good kind heart desarves it."

Farmer—"An' whisper; I wish you'd offer up a prayer for the rulin' o' the tongue. The Lord might hear *you*, but there's no great hopes that ever he'll hear *me;* though I've prayed for it almost ever since I was married, night an' day, winther an' summer; but no use, she's as bad as ever."

This was said in a kind of friendly insinuating undertone to Owen; who, on hearing it, simply nodded his head, but made no other reply.

They then recommenced their journey, after having once more blessed, and been invited by, their charitable entertainers, who made them promise never to pass their house without stopping a night with them.

It is not our intention to trace Owen M'Carthy and his wife through all the variety which a wandering pauper's life affords. He never could reconcile himself to the habits of a mendicant. His honest pride and integrity of heart raised him above it; neither did he sink into the whine and cant of imposture, nor the slang of knavery. No; there was a touch of manly sorrow about him, which neither time, nor familiarity with his degraded mode of life, could take away from him. His usual observation to his wife, and he never made it without a pang of intense bitterness, was—"Kathleen, darlin', it's thrue we have enough to ate an' to dhrink; but *we have no home—no home!*" To a man like him it was a thought of surpassing bitterness, indeed.

"Ah! Kathleen," he would observe, "if we had but the poorest shed that could be built, provided it was *our own*, wouldn't we be happy? The bread we ate, avourneen, doesn't do us good. We don't work for it; it's the bread of shame and idleness: and yet it's Owen M'Carthy that ates it! But, avourneen, that's past; an' we'll never see our own home, or our own hearth agin. That's what's cuttin' into my heart, Kathleen. Never!—never!"

Many a trial, too, of another kind, was his patience called upon to sustain; particularly from the wealthy and the more elevated in life, when his inexperience as a mendicant led him to solicit their assistance.

"Begone, sirrah, off my grounds!" one would say. "Why don't you work, you sturdy impostor," another would exclaim, "rather than stroll about so lazily, training your brats to the gallows?" "You should be taken up, fellow, as a vagrant," a third would observe; "and if I ever catch you coming up my avenue again, depend upon it, I will slip my dogs at you and your idle spawn."

Owen, on these occasions, turned away in silence; he did not curse them; but the pangs of his honest heart went before Him who will, sooner or later, visit upon the heads of such men their cruel spurning and neglect of the poor.

"Kathleen," he observed to his wife, one day, about a year or more after they had begun to beg; "Kathleen, I have been turnin' it in my mind, that some of these childhre might sthrive to earn their bit an' sup, an' their little coverin' of clo'es, poor things. We might put them to herd cows in the summer, an' the *girshas* to somethin' else in the farmers' houses. What do you think, asthore?"

"For God's sake do, Owen; sure my heart's crushed to see them—my own childhre, that I could lay down my life for—beggin' from door to door. Och, do something for them that way, Owen, an' you'll relieve the heart that loves them. It's a sore sight to a mother's eye, Owen, to see her childhre beggin' their morsel."

"It is darlin'—it is; we'll hire out the three eldest—Brian, an' Owen, an' Pether, to herd cows; an' we may get Peggy into some farmer's house to do loose jobs an' run of messages. Then we'd have only little Kathleen an' poor Ned along wid us. I'll thry any way, an' if I can get them places, who knows what may happen? I have a plan in my head that I'll tell you, thin."

"Arrah, what is it, Owen, jewel? Sure if I know it, maybe when I'm sorrowful, that thinkin' of it, an' lookin' forrid to it will make me happier. An' I'm sure, acushla, you would like that."

"But, maybe, Kathleen, if it wouldn't come to pass, that the disappointment 'ud be heavy on you?"

"How could it, Owen? Sure we can't be worse nor we are, whatever happens?"

"Thrue enough, indeed, I forgot that; an' yet we might, Kathleen. Sure we'd be worse, if we or the childhre had bad health."

"God forgive me thin, for what I said! We might be worse. Well, but what is the plan, Owen?"

"Why, when we get the childhre places, I'll sthrive to take a little house, an' work as a cottar. Then, Kathleen, '*we'd have a home of our own.*' I'd work from light to light; I'd work before hours an' afther hours; ay, nine days in the week, or we'd be comfortable in our own little home. We might be poor, Kathleen, I know that, an' hard pressed too; but then, as I said, we'd have our own home, an' our own hearth; our morsel, if it 'ud be homely, would be sweet, for it would be the fruits of our own labour."

"Now, Owen, do you think you could manage to get that?"

"Wait, acushla, till we get the childhre settled. Then I'll thry the other plan, for it's good to thry anything that could take us out of this disgraceful life."

This humble speculation was a source of great comfort to them. Many a time have they forgotten their sorrows in contemplating the simple picture of their happy little cottage. Kathleen, in particular, drew with all the vivid colouring of a tender mother, and an affectionate wife, the various sources of comfort and contentment to be found even in a cabin, whose inmates are blessed with a love of independence, industry and mutual affection.

Owen, in pursuance of his intention, did not neglect, when the proper season arrived, to place out his eldest children among the farmers. The reader need not be told that there was that about him which gained respect. He had, therefore, little trouble in obtaining his wishes on this point, and to his great satisfaction, he saw three of them hired out to earn their own support.

It was now a matter of some difficulty for him to take a cabin and get employment. They had not a single article of furniture, and neither bed nor bedding, with the exception of blankets almost worn past use. He was resolved, however, to give up, at all risks, the life of a mendicant. For this purpose, he and the wife agreed to adopt a plan quite usual in Ireland, under circumstances somewhat different from his;

this was, that Kathleen should continue to beg for their support, until the first half-year of the children's service should expire; and in the meantime, that he, if possible, should secure employment for himself. By this means, his earnings, and that of his children, might remain untouched, so that in half a year, he calculated upon being able to furnish a cabin, and proceed, as a cottier, to work for, and support his young children and his wife, who determined on her part, not to be idle any more than her husband. As the plan was a likely one, and as Owen was bent on earning his bread, rather than be a burthen to others, it is unnecessary to say that it succeeded. In less than a year he found himself once more in a home, and the force of what he felt on sitting for the first time since his pauperism, at his own hearth, may easily be conceived by the reader. For some years after this, Owen got on slowly enough; his wages as a daily labourer being so miserable, that it required him to exert every nerve to keep the house over their head. What, however, will not carefulness and a virtuous determination, joined to indefatigable industry, do?

After some time, backed as he was by his wife, and even by his youngest children, he found himself beginning to improve. In the mornings and evenings he cultivated his garden and his rood of potato-ground. He also collected with a wheelbarrow, which he borrowed from an acquaintance, compost from the neighbouring road; scoured an old drain before his door; dug rich earth, and tossed it into the pool of rotten water beside the house, and in fact, adopted several other modes of collecting manure. By this means, he had, each spring, a large portion of rich stuff on which to plant his potatoes. His landlord permitted him to spread this for planting upon his land; and Owen, ere long, instead of a rood, was able to plant half an acre, and ultimately, an acre of potatoes. The produce of this, being more than sufficient for the consumption of his family, he sold the surplus, and with the money gained by the sale was

enabled to sow half an acre of oats, of which, when made into meal, he disposed of the greater share.

Industry is capital; for even when unaided by capital it creates it; whereas, idleness with capital, produces only poverty and ruin. Owen, after selling his meal and as much potatoes as he could spare, found himself able to purchase a cow. Here was the means of making more manure; he had his cow, and he had also straw enough for her provender during the winter. The cow by affording milk to his family, enabled them to live more cheaply; her butter they sold, and this, in addition to his surplus meal and potatoes every year, soon made him feel that he had a few guineas to spare. He now bethought him of another mode of helping himself forward in the world; after buying the best "slip" of a pig he could find, a sty was built for her, and ere long he saw a fine litter of young pigs within a snug shed. These he reared until they were about two months old, when he sold them, and found that he had considerably gained by the transaction. This department, however, was under the management of Kathleen, whose life was one of incessant activity and employment. Owen's children, during the period of his struggles and improvements, were, by his advice, multiplying *their* little capital as fast as himself. The two boys, who had now shot up into the stature of young men, were at work as labouring servants in the neighbourhood. The daughters were also engaged as servants with the adjoining farmers. The boys bought each a pair of two-year old heifers, and the daughter one. These they sent to graze up in the mountains at a trifling charge, for the first year or two: when they became springers, they put them to rich infield grass for a few months, until they got a marketable appearance, after which their father brought them to the neighbouring fairs, where they usually sold to great advantage, in consequence of the small outlay required in rearing them.

In fact, the principle of industry ran through the

family. There was none of them idle; none of them a burthen or a check upon the profits made by the labourer. On the contrary, "they laid their shoulders together," as the phrase is, and proved to the world, that when the proper disposition is followed up by suitable energy and perseverance, it must generally reward him who possesses it.

It is certainly true that Owen's situation in life *now* was essentially different from that which it had been during the latter years of his struggles *as a farmer*. It was much more favourable, and far better calculated to develope successful exertion. If there be a class of men deserving public sympathy, it is that of the small farmers of Ireland. Their circumstances are fraught with all that is calculated to depress and ruin them; rents far above their ability, increasing poverty, and bad markets. The land, which during the last war might have enabled the renter to pay three pounds per acre, and yet still maintain himself with tolerable comfort, could not now pay more than one pound, or, at the most, one pound ten; and yet, such is the infatuation of landlords, that, in most instances, the terms of leases taken out then are rigorously exacted. Neither can the remission of yearly arrears be said to strike at the root of the evils under which they suffer. The fact of the disproportionate rent hanging over them is a disheartening circumstance, that paralyzes their exertion, and sinks their spirits. If a landlord remit the rent for one term, he deals more harshly with the tenant at the next; whatever surplus, if any, his former indulgence leaves in the tenant's hands, instead of being expended upon his property as capital, and being permitted to lay the foundation of hope and prosperity, is drawn from him, at next term, and the poor struggling tenant is thrown back into as much distress, embarrassment, and despondency as ever. There are, I believe, few tenants in Ireland of the class I allude to, who are not from one gale to three in arrear. Now, how can it be expected, that such men will labour with

spirit and earnestness to raise crops which they may never reap? Crops which the landlords may seize upon to secure as much of his rent as he can.

I have known a case in which the arrears were not only remitted, but the rent lowered to a reasonable standard, such as, considering the markets, could be paid. And what was the consequence? The tenant who was looked upon as a negligent man, from whom scarcely any rent could be got, took courage, worked his farm with a spirit and success which he had not evinced before; and ere long was in a capacity to pay his gales to the very day; so that the judicious and humane landlord was finally a gainer by his own excellent economy. This was an experiment, and it succeeded beyond expectation.

Owen M'Carthy did not work with more zeal and ability as an humble cottier, than he did when a farmer; but the tide was against him as a landholder, and instead of having advanced, he actually lost ground until he became a pauper. No doubt, the peculiarly unfavourable run of two hard seasons, darkened by sickness and famine, were formidable obstacles to him; but he must eventually have failed, even had they not occurred. They accelerated his downfall, but did not cause it.

The Irish people, though poor, are exceedingly anxious to be independent. Their highest ambition is to hold a farm. So strong is this principle in them, that they will, without a single penny of capital, or any visible means to rely on, without consideration or forethought, come forward and offer a rent which, if they reflected only for a moment, they must feel to be unreasonably high. This, indeed, is a great evil in Ireland. But what, in the meantime, must we think of those imprudent landlords, and their more imprudent agents, who let their land to such persons, without proper inquiry into their means, knowledge of agriculture, and general character as moral and industrious men? A farm of land is to be let; it is advertised through the parish; application is to be made before

such a day, to so and so. The day arrives, the agent or land-steward looks over the proposals, and after singling out the highest bidder, declares him tenant, as a matter of course. Now, perhaps, this said tenant does not possess a shilling in the world, nor a shilling's worth. Most likely he is a new-married man, with nothing but his wife's bed and bedding, his wedding suit, and his blackthorn cudgel, which we may suppose him to keep in reserve for the bailiff. However, he commences his farm; and then follow the shiftings, the scramblings, and the fruitless struggles to succeed, where success is impossible. His farm is not half-tilled; his crops are miserable; the gale-day has already passed; yet, he can pay nothing until he takes it out of the land. Perhaps, he runs away—makes a moonlight flitting—and, by the aid of his friends, succeeds in bringing the crop with him. The landlord, or agent, declares he is a knave; forgetting that the man had no other alternative, and that they were the greater knaves and fools too, for encouraging him to undertake a task that was beyond his strength.

In calamity, we are anxious to derive support from the sympathy of our friends; in our success, we are eager to communicate to them the power of participating in our happiness. When Owen once more found himself independent and safe, he longed to realise two plans on which he had for some time before been seriously thinking. The first was to visit his former neighbours, that they might at length know that Owen M'Carthy's station in the world was such as became his character. The second was, if possible, to take a farm in his native parish, that he might close his days among the companions of his youth, and the friends of his maturer years. He had, also, another motive; there lay the burying-place of the M'Carthy's, in which slept the mouldering dust of his own "golden-haired" Alley. With them—in his daughter's grave—he intended to sleep his long sleep. Affection for the dead is the memory of the heart. In no other grave-yard could he reconcile it to him-

self to be buried; to it had all his forefathers been gathered; and though calamity had separated him from the scenes where they had passed through existence, yet he was resolved that death should not deprive him of its last melancholy consolation;—that of reposing with all that remained of the "departed," who had loved him, and whom he had loved. He believed, that to neglect this, would be to abandon a sacred duty, and felt sorrow at the thought of being like an absent guest from the assembly of *his own* dead; for there is a principle of undying hope in the heart, that carries, with bold and beautiful imagery, the realities of life into the silent recesses of death itself.

Having formed the resolution of visiting his old friends at Tubber Derg, he communicated it to Kathleen and his family; his wife received the intelligence with undisguised delight.

"Owen," she replied, "indeed I'm glad you mintioned it. Many a time the thoughts of our place, an' the people about it, comes over me. I know, Owen, it'll go to your heart to see it; but still, avourneen, you'd like, too, to see the ould faces an' the warm hearts of them that pitied us, an' helped us, as well as they could, when we war broken down."

"I would, Kathleen; but I'm not goin' merely to see thim an' the place. I intind, if I can, to take a bit of land somewhere *near* Tubber Derg. I'm unaisy in my mind, for 'fraid I'd not sleep in the grave-yard where all belongin' to me lie."

A chord of the mother's heart was touched; and in a moment the memory of their beloved child brought the tears to her eyes.

"Owen, avourneen, I have one requist to ax of you, an' I'm sure you won't refuse it to me: if I die afore you, let me be buried wid Alley. Who has a right to sleep so near her as her own mother?

"The child's in my heart still," said Owen, suppressing his emotion; "thinkin' of the unfortunate mornin' I wint to Dublin, brings her back to me. I

see her standin' wid her fair pale face—pale—oh, my God !—wid hunger an' sickness—her little thin clo'es, an' her goolden hair, tossed about by the dark blast—the tears in her eyes, an' the smile that she once had on her face—houldin' up her mouth, an' sayin' 'Kiss *me* agin, father;' as if she knew, somehow, that I'd never see her, nor her me, any more. And whin I looked back, as I was turnin' the corner, there she stood, straining her eyes after her father, that she was then taking the last sight of until the judgment day."

His voice here became broken, and he sat in silence for a few minutes.

"It's sthrange," he added, with more firmnesss, "how she's so often in my mind !"

"But Owen dear," replied Kathleen, "sure it was the will of God that she should lave us. She's now a bright angel in heaven, an' I dunna if it's right—indeed, I doubt it's sinful for us to think so much about her. Who knows but her innocent spirit is makin' inthercession for us all, before the blessed Mother o' God ! Who knows but it was her that got us the good fortune that flowed in upon us, an' that made our strugglin' and our labourin' turn out so *lucky*."

The idea of being *lucky* or *unlucky* is, in Ireland, an enemy to industry. It is certainly better that the people should believe success in life to be, as it is, the result of virtuous exertion, than of contingent circumstances, over which they themselves have no control. Still there was something beautiful in the superstition of Kathleen's affections; something that touched the heart and its dearest associations.

"It's very true, Kathleen," replied her husband; "but God is ever ready to help them that keeps an honest heart, an' do everything in their power to live creditably. They may fail for a time, or he may thry them for awhile, but sooner or later good intintions and honest labour will be rewarded. Look at ourselves—blessed be his name !"

"But whin do you mane to go to Tubber Derg, Owen?"

"In the beginnin' of the next week. An' Kathleen, ahagur, if you remimber the bitther mornin' we came upon the world—but we'll not be spakin' of that now. I don't like to think of it. Some other time, maybe, when we're settled among our ould friends, I'll mintion it."

"Well, the Lord bliss your endayvours, any how! Och, Owen, do thry an' get us a snug farm somewhere near them. But you didn't answer me about Alley, Owen?"

"Why, you must have your wish, Kathleen, although I intended to keep that place for myself. Still we can sleep one on aich side of her; an' that may be asily done, for our burying ground is large: so set your mind at rest on that head. I hope God won't call us till we see our childhre settled dacently in the world. But sure, at all evints, let his blessed will be done!"

"Amin! amin! It's not right of any one to keep their hearts fixed too much upon the world; nor even, they say, upon one's own childhre."

"People may love their childhre as much as they plase, Kathleen, if they don't let their *grah* for them spoil the crathurs, by giving them their own will, till they become headstrong and overbearin'. Now, let my linen be as white as a bone before Monday, plase goodness; I hope, by that time, that Jack Dogherty will have my new clo'es made; for I intind to go as dacent as ever they seen me in my best days."

"An' so you will, too avillish. Throth, Owen, it's you that'll be the proud man, steppin' in to them in all your grandeur? Ha, ha, ha! The spirit o' the M'Carthy's is in you still, Owen."

"Ha, ha, ha! It is, darlin'; it is, indeed; an' I'd be sarry it wasn't. I long to see poor Widow Murray. I dunna is her son Jemmy, married. Who knows, afther all we suffered, but I might be able to help her yet?—that is, if she stands in need of it. But, I suppose, her childhre's grown up now, an' able to assist her. Now, Kathleen, mind Monday next; an' have

everything ready. I'll stay away a week or so, at the most, an' afther that I'll have news for you about all o' them."

When Monday morning arrived, Owen found himself ready to set out for Tubber Derg. The tailor had not disappointed him; and Kathleen, to do her justice, took care that the proofs of her good housewifery should be apparent in the whiteness of his linen. After breakfast, he dressed himself in all his finery; and it would be difficult to say whether the harmless vanity that peeped out occasionally from his simplicity of character, or the open and undisguised triumph of his faithful wife, whose eye rested on him with pride and affection, was most calculated to produce a smile.

"Now, Kathleen," said he, when preparing for his immediate departure, "I'm thinkin' of what they'll say, when they see me so smooth and warm-lookin'. I'll engage they'll be axin' one another, 'Musha, how did Owen M'Carthy get an, at all, to be so well to do in the world, as he appears to be, afther failin' on his ould farm?"

"Well, but Owen, you know how to manage them."

"Troth, I do that. But there is *one* thing they'll never get out o' me, any way."

"You won't tell *that* to any o' them, Owen?"

"Kathleen, if I thought they only suspected it, I'd never show my face in Tubber Derg agin. I think I could bear to be—an' yet it 'ud be a hard struggle wid me too—but I *think* I could bear to be buried among black strangers, rather than it should be said, over my grave, among my own, 'there's where Owen M'Carthy lies—who was the only man, of his name, that ever begged his morsel on the king's highway. There he lies, the descendant of the great M'Carthy Mores, an' yet he was a beggar.' I know, Kathleen achora, it's neither a sin or a shame to ax one's bit from our fellow-creatures, whin fairly brought to it, widout any fault of our own; but still I feel something in me, that can't bear to think of it, widout shame an' heaviness of heart."

"Well, it's one comfort, that nobody knows it but ourselves. The poor childhre, for their own sakes, won't ever breathe it; so that it's likely the sacret i'll be berrid wid us."

"I hope so, acushla. Does this coat sit asy atween the shoulders? I feel it catch me a little."

"The sorra nicer. There; it was only your waistcoat that was turned down in the collar. Here—hould your arm. There now—it wanted to be pulled down a little at the cuffs. Owen, it's a beauty; an' I think I have a good right to be proud of it, for it's every thread my own spinnin'."

"How do I look in it, Kathleen? Tell me thruth, now."

"Troth, you're twenty years younger; the never a day less."

"I think I needn't be ashamed to go afore my ould friends, in it, any way. Now bring me my staff from undher the bed above; an', in the name o' God, I'll set out."

"Which o' them, Owen? Is it the oak or the blackthorn?"

"The oak, acushla. Oh, no; not the blackthorn. It's it that I brought to Dublin wid me, the unlucky thief, an' that I had while we wor *a shaughran*. Divil a one o' me bud 'ud blush in the face, if I brought it even in my hand afore them. The oak, ahagur; the oak. You'll get it atween the foot o' the bed an' the wall."

When Kathleen placed the staff in his hand, he took off his hat and blessed himself, then put it on, looked at his wife, and said—"Now darlin', in the name o' God, I'll go. Husht, avillish machree, don't be cryin'; sure I'll be back to you in a week."

"Och! I can't help it, Owen. Sure this is the second time you war ever away from me more nor a day; an' I'm thinkin' of what happened both to you an' me, the *first* time you wint. Owen, acushla, I feel that if anything happened you, I'd break my heart."

"Arrah, what 'ud happen me, darlin' wid God to

protect me? Now, God be wid you Kathleen dheelish, till I come back to you wid good news, I hope. I'm not goin' in sickness an' misery, as I wint afore, to see a man that would'nt hear my appale to him; an' I'm lavin' you comfortable, agrah, an' wantin' for nothin'. Sure it's only about five-an'-twenty miles from this—a mere step. The good God bless an' take care of you, my darlin' wife, till I come home to you!"

He kissed the tears that streamed from her eyes; and, hemming several times, pressed her hand, his face rather averted, then grasped his staff, and commenced his journey.

Scenes like this were important events to our humble couple. Life, when untainted by the crimes and artificial manners which destroy its purity, is a beautiful thing to contemplate among the virtuous poor; and, where the current of affection runs deep and smooth, the slightest incident will agitate it. So was it with Owen M'Carthy and his wife. Simplicity, truth, and affection, constituted their character. In them there was no complication of incongruous elements. The order of their virtues was not broken, nor the purity of their affections violated, by the anomalous blending together of opposing principles, such as are to be found in those who are involuntarily contaminated by the corruption of human society.

Owen had not gone far, when Kathleen called to him: "Owen, ahagur—stand, darlin'; but don't come back a step, for fraid o' bad luck."*

"Did I forget anything, Kathleen?" he inquired. "Let me see; no; sure I have my beads an' my tobaccy box, an' my two clane shirts an' hankerchers in the bundle. What is it, acushla?"

"I need n't be axin' you, for I know you would n't forget it; but for fraid you might—Owen, whin you're at Tubber Derg, go to little Alley's grave, an'

* When an Irish peasant sets out on a journey, or to transact business in fair or market, he will not, if possible, turn back. It is considered unlucky; as it is also to be crossed by a hare, or met by a red-haired woman.

look at it: an' bring me back word how it appears. You might get it cleaned up, if there's weeds or anything growin' upon it; an' Owen, would you bring me a bit o' the clay, tied up in your pocket. Whin you're there, spake to her; tell her it was the lovin' mother that bid you, an' say anything that you'd think might keep her asy, an' give her pleasure. Tell her we're not now as we wor whin she was wid us; that we don't feel hunger, nor cowld, nor want; an' that nothin' is a throuble to us, barrin' that we miss *her*—ay, even yet—a *suillish machree* * that she was—that we miss her fair face an' goolden hair from among us. Tell her this; an' tell her it was the lovin' mother that said it, an' that sint the message to her."

"I'll do it all, Kathleen; I'll do it all—all. An' now go in, darlin', an' don't be frettin.' Maybe we'll soon be near her, plase God, where we can see the place she sleeps in, often."

They then separated again; and Owen, considerably affected by the maternal tenderness of his wife, proceeded on his journey. He had not, actually, even at the period of his leaving home, been able to determine on what particular friend he should first call. That his welcome would be hospitable, nay, enthusiastically so, he was certain. In the meantime he vigorously pursued his journey; and partook neither of refreshment nor rest, until he arrived, a little after dusk, at a turn of the well-known road, which, had it been day-light, would have opened to him a view of Tubber Derg. He looked towards the beeches, however, under which it stood; but to gain a sight of it was impossible. His road now lying a little to the right, he turned to the house of his sterling friend, Frank Farrell, who had given him and his family shelter and support, when he was driven, without remorse, from his own holding. In a short time he reached Frank's residence, and felt a glow of sincere satisfaction at finding the same air of comfort and warmth about it

* Light of my heart.

as formerly. Through the kitchen window he saw the strong light of the blazing fire, and heard, ere he presented himself, the loud hearty laugh of his friend's wife, precisely as light and animated as it had been fifteen years before.

Owen lifted the latch and entered, with that fluttering of the pulse which every man feels on meeting with a friend, after an interval of many years.

"Musha, good people, can ye tell me is Frank Farrell at home?"

"Why, thin, he's not jist widin now, but he'll be here in no time entirely," replied one of his daughters; "Won't you sit down, honest man, an' we'll sind for him."

"I'm thankful to you," said Owen. "I'll sit, sure enough, till he comes in."

Why thin!—eh! it must—it *can* be no other!" exclaimed Farrell's wife, bringing over a candle and looking Owen earnestly in the face; "sure I'd know that voice all the world over! Why, thin, marciful Father—Owen M'Carthy,—Owen M'Carthy, is it your four quarthers that's livin' an' well? Queen o' heaven, Owen M'Carthy darlin', you're welcome!" the word was here interrupted by a hearty kiss from the kind housewife;—"welcome a thousand an' a thousand times! *Vick no hoiah!* Owen dear, an' are you livin' at all? An' Kathleen, Owen an' the childre, an' all of yez—an' how are they?"

"Throth, we're livin' an' well, Bridget; never was betther, thanks be to God an' you, in our lives."

Owen was now surrounded by such of Farrell's children, as were old enough to remember him; every one of whom he shook hands with, and kissed.

"Why, thin, the Lord save my sowl, Bridget," said he, "are these the little bouchaleens an' colleens that were runnin' about my feet whin I was here afore? Well, to be sure! How they do shoot up! An' is this Atty?"

"No: but *this* is Atty, Owen; faix Brian outgrew him; an' here's Mary, and this is Bridget Oge."

"Well!—well! But, where did these two young shoots come from? this boy an' the colleen here? They worn't to the fore, in *my* time, Bridget."

"This is Owen, called after yourself,—an, this is Kathleen. I needn't tell you who she was called afther,"

"*Gutsho, alanna? thurm pogue?*—come here, child, and kiss me," said Owen to his little namesake; "an' sure I can't forget the little woman here; *gutsho*, a colleen, and kiss me too."

Owen took her on his knee. and kissed her twice.

"Och, but, poor Kathleen," said he, "will be the proud woman of this, when she hears it; in throth she will be that."

"Arrah! what's comin' over me!" said Mrs. Farrell. "Brian, run up to Mickey Lowrie's, for your father. An' see, Brian, don't say who's wantin' him, till we give him a start. Mary, come here, acushla," she added to her eldest daughter in a whisper—"take these two bottles, an' fly up to Peggy Finigan's for the full o' them o' whiskey. Now be back before you're there, or if you don't, that I mightn't, but you'll see what you'll get. Fly, aroon, an' don't let the grass grow undher your feet. An' Owen darlin—but first sit over to the fire:—here get over to this side, it's the snuggest;—arrah, Owen—an' sure I dunna what to ask you first. You're all well? all to the fore?"

"All well, Bridget, an' thanks be to heaven, all to the fore."

"Glory be to God! Throth it warms my heart to hear it. An' the childre's all up finely, boys an' girls?"

"Throth, they are, Bridget, as good lookin' a family o' childre as you'd wish to see. An' what is betther, they're as good as they're good-lookin'."

"Throth, they couldn't but be that, if they tuck at all afther their father an' mother. Bridget, aroon, rub the pan betther—an' lay the knife down, I'll cut the bacon myself, but go an' get a dozen o' the fresh-

est eggs;—an' Kathleen, Owen, how does poor Kathleen look? Does she stand as well as yourself?"

"As young as ever you seen her. God help her!—a thousand degrees betther than whin you seen her last."

"An' well to do, Owen?—now tell the truth? Ooh, musha, I forget who I'm spakin' to, or I wouldn't disremimber the ould sayin' that's abroad this many a year:—'who ever knew a M'Carthy of Tubber Derg to tell a lie, break his word, or refuse to help a friend in distress. But, Owen, you're well to do in the world?'

"We're as well, Bridget, or may be betther, nor you ever knew us, except, indeed, afore the ould lase was run out wid us."

"God be praised agin! Musha, turn round a little, Owen, for 'fraid Frank 'ud get too clear a sight of your face at first. Arrah, do you think he'll know you? Och, to be sure he will; I needn't ax. Your voice would tell upon you, any day."

"Know me! Indeed Frank 'ud know my shadow. He'll know me with half a look."

And Owen was right, for quickly did the eye of his old friend recognise him, despite of the little plot that was laid to try his penetration. To describe their interview would be to repeat the scene we have already attempted to depict between Owen and Mrs. Farrell. No sooner were the rites of hospitality performed, than the tide of conversation began to flow with greater freedom. Owen ascertained one important fact, which we will here mention, because it produces, in a great degree, the want of anything like an independent class of yeomanry in the country. On inquiring after his old acquaintances, he discovered that a great many of them, owing to high rents, had emigrated to America. They belonged to that class of independent farmers, who, after the expiration of their old leases, finding the little capital they had saved beginning to diminish, in consequence of rents which they could not pay, deemed it more prudent, while anything remained in their hands, to seek a

country where capital and industry might be made available. Thus did the landlords, by their mismanagement and neglect, absolutely drive off their estates, the only men, who, if properly encouraged, were capable of becoming the strength and pride of the country. It is this system, joined to the curse of middlemen and sub-letting, which has left the country without any third grade of decent substantial yeomen, who might stand as a bond of peace between the highest and the lowest classes. It is this which has split the kingdom into two divisions, constituting the extreme ends of society—the wealthy and the wretched. If this third class existed, Ireland would neither be so political nor discontented as she is: but on the contrary, more remarkable for peace and industry. At present, the lower classes, being too poor, are easily excited by those who promise them a better order of things than that which exists. These theorists step into the exercise of that legitimate influence which the landed proprietors have lost by their neglect. There is no middle class in the country, who can turn round to them and say, "Our circumstances are easy, we want nothing; carry your promises to the poor, for that which you hold forth to *their* hopes, *we* enjoy in reality." The poor soldier, who, because he was wretched, volunteered to go on the forlorn hope, made a fortune; but when asked if he would go on a second enterprise of a similar kind, shrewdly replied; "General, I am *now* an independent man; send some *poor* devil on your forlorn hope who wants to make a fortune."

Owen now heard anecdotes and narratives of all occurrences, whether interesting or strange, that had taken place during his absence. Among others, was the death of his former landlord, and the removal of the agent who had driven him to beggary. Tubber Derg, he found, was then the property of a humane and considerate man, who employed a judicious and benevolent gentleman to manage it.

"One thing, I can tell you," said Frank;" it was

but a short time in the new agent's hands, when the dacent farmers stopped goin' to America."

"But, Frank," said Owen, and he sighed on putting the question, "who is in Tubber Derg now?"

"Why, thin, a son of ould Rousin' Red-head's, of Tullyvernon—young Con Roe, or the Ace o' Hearts—for he was called both by the youngsters—if you remimber him. His head's as red, an' double as big, even, as his father's was, an' you know that no hat would fit ould Con, until he sent his measure to Jemmy Lamb, the hatter. Dick Nugent put it out on him, that Jemmy always made Rousin' Red-head's hat, either upon the half-bushel pot, or a five-gallon keg of whiskey. 'Talkin' of the keg,' says Dick, 'for the matther of that,' says he, 'divil a much differ the hat will persave; for the one'—meanin' ould Con's head, who was a hard dhrinker—'the one,' says Con, 'is as much a keg as the other—ha! ha! ha!' Dick met Rousin' Red-head another day; 'Arrah, Con,' says he, 'why do you get your hats made upon a *pot*, man alive? Sure that's the rason that you're so fond o' *pot*een.' A quare mad crathur was Dick, an' would go forty miles for a fight. Poor fellow, he got his skull broke in a scrimmage betwixt the Redmonds and the O'Hanlons; an' his last words were, 'Bad luck to you, Redmond—O'Hanlon, I never thought *you*, above all men, dead an' gone, would be the death o' me.' Poor fellow! he was for pacifyin' them, for a wondher, but, instead o' that, he got pacified himself."

"An' how is young Con doing, Frank?"

"Hut, divil a much time he has to do aither well or ill, yit. There was four tenants on Tubber Derg since you left it, an' he's the fifth. It's hard to say how he'll do; but I believe he's the best o' thim, for so far. That may be owin' to the landlord. The rent's let down to him; an' I think he'll be able to take bread, an' good bread, too, out of it."

"God send, poor man!"

"Now, Owen, would you like to go back to it?"

"I can't say that. I love the place, *but I suffered*

too much in it. No.; but I'll tell you, Frank, if there was e'er a snug farm near it that I could get rasonable, I'd take it."

Frank slapped his knee exultingly. "*Ma chuirp!*—do you say so, Owen!"

"Indeed I do."

"Thin, upon my song, that's the luckiest thing I ever knew. There's, this blessed minute, a farm o' sixteen acres that the Lacy's is lavin'—goin' to America, and it's to be set. They'll go the week afther next, an' the house needn't be cowld, for you can come to it the very day afther they lave it."

"Well," said Owen, "I'm glad of that. Will you come wid me to-morrow, an' we'll see about it?"

"To be sure I will; an' what's betther, too; the Agint is a son of ould Misther Rogerson's, a man that knows you an' the history of them you came from, well. An', another thing, Owen! I tell you, whin its abroad that *you* want to take the farm, there's not a man in the parish will bid agin you. You may know that yourself."

"I think, indeed, they would rather sarve me than otherwise," replied Owen; an' in the name o' God, we'll see what can be done. Misther Rogerson, himself, 'ud speak to his son for me; so that I'll be sure of his intherest. Arrah, Frank, how is an ould friend o' mine, that I have a great regard for—poor Widow Murray?"

"Widow Murray? Poor woman, *she's* happy."

"You don't mane she's dead?"

"She's dead, Owen, and happy, I trust, in the Saviour. She died last spring was a two years."

"God be good to her sowl! An' are the childhre in her place still? It's she that was the dacent woman."

"Throth, they are; an' sorrow a betther doin' family in the parish than they are. It's they that'll be glad to see you, Owen. Many a time I have seen their poor mother, heavens be her bed, lettin' down the tears, when she used to be spakin' of you, or mintionin' how often you sarved her; espeshially,

about some day or other that you previnted her cows from bein' canted for the rint. She's dead now, an' God he knows an honest hard-workin' woman she ever was."

"Dear me, Frank, isn't it a wondher to think how the people dhrop off! There's Widow Murray, one o' my ouldest frinds, an' Pether M'Mahon, an' Barney Lorinan—not to forget pleasant Rousin' Red-head—all taken away! Well! well!—sure it's the will o' God! We can't be here always."

After much conversation, enlivened by the bottle, though but sparingly used on the part of Owen, the hour of rest arrived, when the family separated for the night.

The grey dawn of a calm beautiful summer's morning found Owen up and abroad, long before the family of honest Frank had risen. When dressing himself, with the intention of taking an early walk, he was asked by his friend why he stirred so soon, or if he—his host—should accompany him.

"No," replied Owen; "lie still; jist let me look over the country while it's asleep. Whin I'm musin' this a-way I don't like any body to be along wid me, I have a place to go an' see, too—an' a message—a tendher message, from poor Kathleen, to deliver, that I wouldn't wish a second person to hear. Sleep, Frank. I'll just crush the head o' my pipe agin one o' the half-burned turf that the fire was raked wid, an' walk out for an hour or two. Afther our breakfast we'll go an' look about this new farm."

He sallied out as he spoke, and closed the door after him in that quiet thoughtful way for which he was ever remarkable. The season was midsummer, and the morning wanted at least an hour of sun-rise. Owen ascended a little knoll, above Frank's house, on which he stood and surveyed the surrounding country with a pleasing but melancholy interest. As his eye rested on Tubber Derg, he felt the difference strongly between the imperishable glories of nature's works, and those which are executed by man. His house he

would not have known except by its site. It was not, in fact, the same house, but another which had been built in its stead. This disappointed and vexed him. An object on which his affections had been placed was removed. A rude stone house stood before him, rough and unplastered; against each end of which was built a stable and cow-house, sloping down from the gables to low doors at both sides; adjoining these rose two mounds of filth, large enough to be easily distinguished from the knoll on which he stood. He sighed as he contrasted it with the neat and beautiful farm-house, which shone there in his happy days, white as a lily, beneath the covering of the lofty beeches. There was no air of comfort, neatness, or independence about it; on the contrary, everything betrayed the evidence of struggle and difficulty, joined, probably, to want both of skill and of capital. He was disappointed, and turned his gaze upon the general aspect of the country, and the houses in which either his old acquaintances or their children lived. The features of the landscape were, certainly, the same; but even here was a change for the worse. The warmth of colouring, which wealth and independence give to the appearance of a cultivated country, was gone. Decay and coldness seemed to brood upon everything he saw. The houses, the farm-yards, the ditches, and enclosures, were all marked by the blasting proofs of national decline. Some exceptions there were to this disheartening prospect; but they were only sufficient to render the torn and ragged evidences of poverty, and its attendant—carelessness—more conspicuous. He left the knoll, knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and putting it into his waistcoat pocket, ascended a larger hill, which led to the grave-yard where his child lay buried. On his way to this hill, which stood about half a mile distant, he passed a few houses of an humble description, with whose inhabitants he had been well acquainted. Some of these stood nearly as he remembered them; but others were roofless, with their dark mud gables either fallen in or

partially broken down. He surveyed their smoke-coloured walls with sorrow; and looked, with a sense of the transient character of all man's works, upon the chickweed, docks, and nettles, which had shot up so rankly on the spot where many a chequered scene of joy and sorrow had flitted over the circumscribed circle of humble life, ere the annihilating wing of ruin swept away them and their habitations.

When he had ascended the hill, his eye took a wider range. The more distant and picturesque part of the country lay before him. "Ah!" said he, in a soliloquy, "Lord bless us, how sthrange is this world!—an' what poor crathurs are men! There 's the dark mountains, the hills, the rivers, an' the green glens, all the same; an' nothin' else amost but 's changed! The very song of that blackbird, in thim thorn-bushes an' hazels below me, is like the voice of an ould friend to my ears. Och, indeed, hardly that, for even the voice of man changes; but that song is the same as I heard it for the best part o' my life. That mornin' star, too, is the same bright crathur up there that it ever was! God help us! Hardly anything changes but man, an' he seems to think that he can never change; if one is to judge by his thoughtlessness, folly, an' wickedness!"

A smaller hill, around the base of which went the same imperfect road that crossed the glen of Tubber Derg, prevented him from seeing the grave-yard to which he was about to extend his walk. To this road he directed his steps. On reaching it he looked, still with a strong memory of former times, to the glen in which his children, himself, and his ancestors had all, during their day, played in the happy thoughtlessness of childhood and youth. But the dark and ragged house jarred upon his feelings. He turned from it with pain, and his eyes rested upon the still green valley with evident relief. He thought of his "buried flower"—"his goolden-haired darlin'," as he used to call her—and almost fancied that he saw her once more wandering waywardly through its tangled mazes, gathering berries, or strolling along the green meadow

with a garland of gowans about her neck. Imagination, indeed, cannot heighten the image of the dead whom we love; but even if it could, there was no standard of ideal beauty in her father's mind beyond that of her own. She had been beautiful; but her beauty was pensive: a fair yet melancholy child; for the charm that ever encompassed her was one of sorrow and tenderness. Had she been volatile and mirthful, as children usually are, he would not have carried so far into his future life the love of her which he cherished. Another reason why he still loved her strongly, was a consciousness that her death had been occasioned by distress and misery; for, as he said, when looking upon the scenes of her brief but melancholy existence—"Avourneen machree, I remimber to see you pickin' the berries; but asthore—asthore—it wasn't for play you did it. It was to keep away the cuttin' of hunger from your heart! Of all our childhre every one said that *you* wor the M'Carthy—never sayin' much, but the heart in you ever full of goodness an' affection. God help me, I'm glad—an', now, that I'm comin' near it—loth to see her grave."

He had now reached the verge of the grave-yard. Its fine old ruin stood there as usual, but not altogether without the symptoms of change. Some persons had, for the purposes of building, thrown down one of its most picturesque walls. Still its ruins clothed with ivy, its mullions moss-covered, its gothic arches and tracery, gray with age, were the same in appearance as he had ever seen them.

On entering this silent palace of Death, he reverently uncovered his head, blessed himself, and, with feelings deeply agitated, sought the grave of his beloved child. He approached it; but a sudden transition from sorrow to indignation took place in his mind, even before he reached the spot on which she lay. "Sacred Mother!" he exclaimed, "who has dared to bury in our ground? Who has—what villain has attimpted to come in upon the M'Carthys—upon the M'Carthy Mores, of Tubber Derg? Who could—had I no friend

to prev—— eh? Sacred Mother, what's this? Father of heaven forgive me! Forgive me, sweet Saviour, for this bad feelin' I got into! Who—who—could raise a head-stone over the darlin' o' my heart, widout one of us knowin' it! Who—who could do it? But let me see if I can make it out. Oh, who could do this blessed thing, for the poor an' the sorrowful?" He began, and with difficulty read as follows :—

"Here lies the body of Alice M'Carthy, the beloved daughter of Owen and Kathleen M'Carthy, aged nine years. She was descended from the M'Carthy Mores.

"Requiescat in pace.

"This head-stone was raised over her by widow Murray, and her son, James Murray, out of grateful respect for Owen and Kathleen M'Carthy, who never suffered the widow and orphan, or a distressed neighbour, to crave assistance from them in vain, until it pleased God to visit them with affliction."

"Thanks to you, my Saviour!" said Owen, dropping on his knees over the grave—"thanks an' praise be to your holy name, that in the middle of my poverty—of all my poverty—I was not forgotten! nor my darlin' child let to lie widout honour in the grave of her family! Make me worthy, blessed Heaven, of what is written down upon me here! An' if the departed spirit of her that honoured the dust of my buried daughter is unhappy, oh, let her be relieved, an' let this act be remimbered to her! Bless her son, too, gracious Father, an' all belongin' to her on this earth! an', if it be your holy will, let them never know distress, or poverty, or wickedness!"

He then offered up a Pater Noster for the repose of his child's soul, and another for the kind-hearted and grateful Widow Murray, after which he stood to examine the grave with greater accuracy.

There was, in fact, no grave visible. The little mound, under which lay what was once such a touching image of innocence, beauty, and feeling, had sunk down to the level of the earth about it. He regretted this, inasmuch as it took away, he thought, part of her individuality. Still he knew it was the spot wherein she had been buried, and with much of that vivid

feeling, and strong figurative language, inseparable from the habits of thought and language of the old Irish families, he delivered the mother's message to the inanimate dust of her once beautiful and heart-loved child. He spoke in a broken voice, for even the mention of her name aloud, over the clay that contained her, struck with a fresh burst of sorrow upon his heart.

"Alley," he exclaimed, in Irish, "Alley, *nhien machree*, your father that loved *you* more nor he loved any other human crathur, brings a message to you from the mother of your heart, avourneen! She bid me call to see the spot where you're lyin', my buried flower, an' to tell you that we're not now, thanks be to God, as we wor whin you lived wid us. We are well to do now, *acushla oge machree*, an' not in hunger, an' sickness, an' misery, as we wor whin you suffered them all! You will love to hear this, pulse of our hearts, an' to know that, through all we suffered—an' bittherly we did suffer since you departed—we never let you out of our memory. No, *asthore villish*, we thought of you, an' cried afther our poor dead flower, many an' many's a time. An' she bid me tell you, darlin' of my heart, that we feel nothin' now so much as that you are not with us to share our comfort an' our happiness. Oh, what wouldn't the mother give to have you back wid her; but it can't be—an' what wouldn't I give to have you before my eyes agin, in health an' in life—but it can't be. The lovin 'mother sent this message to you, Alley. Take it from her; she bid me tell you that we are well an' happy; our name is pure, and, like yourself, widout spot or stain. Won't you pray for us before God, an' get him an' his blessed Mother to look on us wid favour an' compassion? Farewell, Alley Asthore! May you sleep in peace, an' rest on the breast of your Father in Heaven, until we all meet in happiness together. It's your father that's spakin' to you, our lost flower; an' the hand that often smoothed your goolden head is now upon your grave,"

He wiped his eyes as he concluded, and after lifting a little of the clay from her grave, he tied it carefully up, and put it into his pocket.

Having left the grave-yard, he retraced his steps towards Frank Farrell's house. The sun had now risen, and as Owen ascended the larger of the two hills which we have mentioned, he stood again to view the scene that stretched beneath him. About an hour before all was still; the whole country lay motionless, as if the land had been a land of the dead. The mountains, in the distance were covered with the thin mists of morning; the milder and richer parts of the landscape had appeared in that dim gray distinctness which gives to distant objects such a clear outline. With the exception of the blackbird's song, everything seemed as if stricken into silence; there was not a breeze stirring; both animate and inanimate nature reposed as if in a trance; the very trees appeared asleep, and their leaves motionless, as if they had been of marble. But now the scene was changed. The sun had flung his splendour upon the mountain-tops, from which the mists were tumbling in broken fragments to the valleys between them. A thousand birds poured their songs upon the ear; the breeze was up, and the columns of smoke from the farm-houses and cottages played, as if in frolic, in the air. A white haze was beginning to rise from the meadows; early teams were afoot; and labourers going abroad to their employment. The lakes in the distance shone like mirrors; and the clear springs on the mountain sides glittered in the sun, like gems on which the eye could scarcely rest. Life, and light, and motion, appear to be inseparable. The dew of morning lay upon nature like a brilliant veil, realising the beautiful image of Horace, as applied to woman:

Vultus nimium lubricus aspici.

By-and-by the songs of the early workmen were heard; nature had awoke; and Owen, whose heart

was strongly, though unconsciously, alive to the influence of natural religion, participated in the general elevation of the hour, and sought with freshened spirits the house of his entertainer.

As he entered this hospitable roof, the early industry of his friend's wife presented him with a well-swept hearth and a pleasant fire, before which had been placed the identical chair that they had appropriated to his own use. Frank was enjoying "a blast o' the pipe," after having risen; to which luxury the return of Owen gave additional zest and placidity. In fact, Owen's presence communicated a holiday spirit to the family; a spirit, too, which declined not for a moment during the period of his visit.

"Frank," said Owen, "to tell you the truth, I am not half plased wid you this mornin'. I think you didn't thrate me as I ought to expect to be thrated."

"Musha, Owen M'Carthy, how is that?"

"Why, you said nothin' about Widow Murray raisin' a head-stone over our child. You kep me in the dark there, Frank, an' sich a start I never got as I did this mornin' in the grave-yard beyant."

"Upon my sowl, Owen, it wasn't my fau't, nor any of our fau'ts; for, to tell you the truth, we had so much to think and discoorse of last night, that it never sthruck me, good or bad. Indeed it was Bridget that put it first in my head, afther you wint out, an' thin it was too late. Ay, poor woman, the dacent strain was ever in her, the heavens be her bed!"

"Frank, if any of her family was to abuse me till the dogs wouldn't lick my blood, I'd only give them good for evil after that. Oh, Frank, that goes to my heart! To put a head-stone over my weeny goolden-haired darlin', for the sake of the trifles I sarved thim in! Well!—may none belonging to her ever know poverty or hardship; but if they do, an' that I have it——. How-an'-iver, no matther. God bless thim! God bless thim! Wait till Kathleen hears it!"

"An' the best of it was, Owen, that she never expected to see one of your faces. But, Owen, you

think too much about that child. Let us talk of something else. You've seen Tubber Derg wanst more?"

"I did; an' I love it still, in spite of the state it's in."

"Ah! it's different from what it was in your happy days. I was spakin' to Bridget about the farm, an' she advises us to go, widout losin' a minute, an' take it if we can."

"It's near this place I'll die, Frank. I'd not rest in my grave if I wasn't berrid among my own; so we'll take the farm, if possible."

"Well, then, Bridget, hurry the breakfast, avourneen; an' in the name o' goodness, we'll set out, an' clinch the business this very day."

Owen, as we said, was prompt in following up his determinations. After breakfast they saw the agent and his father, for both lived together. Old Rogerson had been intimately acquainted with the M'Carthy's, and, as Frank had anticipated, used his influence with the agent in procuring for the son of his old friend and acquaintance the farm which he sought.

"Jack," said the old gentleman, "you don't probably know the history and character of the Tubber Derg M'Carthy's so well as I do. No man ever required the written bond of a M'Carthy; and it was said of them, and is said still, that the widow and orphan, the poor man or the stranger, never sought their assistance in vain. I, myself, will go security, if necessary, for Owen M'Carthy."

"Sir," replied Owen, "I'm thankful to you; I'm grateful to you. But I wouldn't take the farm, or bid for it at all, unless I could bring forrid enough to stock it as I wish, an' to lay in all that's wantin' to work it well. It 'ud be useless for me to take it—to struggle a year or two—impoverish the land—an' thin run away out of it. No, no; I have what'll put me upon it wid dacency and comfort."

"Then, since my father has taken such an interest in you, M'Carthy, you must have the farm. We shall

get leases prepared, and the business completed in a few days; for I go to Dublin on this day week. Father, I now remember the character of this family; and I remember, too, the sympathy which was felt for one of them, who was harshly ejected, about seventeen or eighteen years ago, out of the lands on which his forefathers had lived, I understand, for centuries."

"I am that man, Sir," returned Owen. "It's too long a story to tell now; but it was only out o' *part* of the lands, Sir, that I was put. What I held was but a poor patch compared to what the family held in my grandfather's time. A great part of it went out of our hands at his death."

"It was very kind of you, Misther Rogerson, to offer to go security for him," said Frank; "but if security was wantin', Sir, I'd not be willin' to let anybody but myself back him. I'd go all I'm worth in the world—an' by my sowl, double as much—for the same man."

"I know that, Frank, an' I thank you; but I could put security in Mr. Rogerson's hands, here, if it was wanted. Good mornin', an' thank you both, gintlemin. To tell yez the thruth," he added, with a smile, "I long to be among my ould friends—manin' the people, an' the hills, an' the green fields of Tubber Derg—agin'; an' thanks be to Goodness, sure I will soon."

In fact, wherever Owen went, within the bounds of his native parish, his name, to use a significant phrase of the people, was before him. His arrival at Frank Farrell's was now generally known by all his acquaintances, and the numbers who came to see him were almost beyond belief. During the two or three successive days he went amongst his old "*cronies*;" and no sooner was his arrival at any particular house intimated than the neighbours all flocked to him. Scythes were left idle, spades were stuck in the earth, and work neglected for the time being; all crowded about him with a warm and friendly interest, not proceeding from idle curiosity, but from affection and respect for the man.

The interview between him and Widow Murray's children was affecting. Owen felt deeply the delicate and touching manner in which they had evinced their gratitude for the services he had rendered them: and young Murray remembered, with a strong gush of feeling, the distresses under which they lay when Owen had assisted them. Their circumstances, owing to the strenuous exertions of the widow's eldest son, soon afterwards improved; and, in accordance with the sentiments of hearts naturally grateful, they had taken that method of testifying what they felt. Indeed, so well had Owen's unparalleled affection for his favourite child been known, that it was the general opinion about Tubber Derg that her death had broken his heart.

"Poor Owen! he's dead," they used to say; "the death of his weeny one, while he was away in Dublin, gave him the finishin' blow. It broke his heart."

Before the week was expired, Owen had the satisfaction of depositing the lease of his new farm, held at a moderate rent, in the hands of Frank Farrell; who, tying it up along with his own, secured it in the "black chest." Nothing remained now but to return home forthwith, and communicate the intelligence to Kathleen. Frank had promised, as soon as the Lacys should vacate the house, to come with a long train of cars, and a number of his neighbours, in order to transfer Owen's family and furniture to his new dwelling. Everything, therefore, had been arranged; and Owen had nothing to do but hold himself in readiness for the welcome arrival of Frank and his friends.

Owen, however, had no sense of enjoyment when not participated in by his beloved Kathleen. If he felt sorrow, it was less as a personal feeling than as a calamity to her. If he experienced happiness, it was doubly sweet to him as reflected from his Kathleen. All this was mutual between them. Kathleen loved Owen precisely as he loved Kathleen. Nor let our readers suppose that such characters are not in humble

life. It is in humble life, where the springs of feeling are not corrupted by dissimulation and evil knowledge,—that the purest, and tenderest, and strongest virtues are to be found.

As Owen approached his home, he could not avoid contrasting the circumstances of his return *now* with those under which, almost broken-hearted after his journey to Dublin, he presented himself to his sorrowing and bereaved wife about eighteen years before. He raised his hat, and thanked God for the success which had, since that period, attended him, and, immediately after his silent thanksgiving, entered the house.

His welcome, our readers may be assured, was tender and affectionate. The whole family gathered about him, and, on his informing them that they were once more about to reside on a farm adjoining to their beloved Tubber Derg, Kathleen's countenance brightened, and the tear of delight gushed to her eyes.

"God be praised, Owen," she exclaimed; "we will have the ould place afore our eyes, an' what is betther, we will be near where Alley is lyin'. But that's true, Owen," she added, "did you give the light of our hearts the mother's message?"

Owen paused, and his features were slightly overshadowed, but only by the solemnity of the feeling.

"Kathleen," said he, "I gave her your message; but, avourneen, I have sthrange news for you about Alley."

"What, Owen? What is it, acushla? Tell me quick!"

"The blessed child was not neglected: no, but she was honoured in our absence. A head-stone was put over her, an' stands there purtily this minute."

"Mother of Glory, Owen!"

"It's thruth. Widow Murray an' her son Jemmy put it up, wid words upon it that brought the tears to my eyes. Widow Murray is dead, but her childhre's doin' well. May God bless and prosper them, an' make her happy!"

The delighted mother's heart was not proof against the widow's gratitude, expressed, as it had been, in a manner so affecting. She rocked herself to and fro in silence, whilst the tears fell in showers down her cheeks. The grief, however, which this affectionate couple felt for their child was not always such as the reader has perceived it to be. It was rather a revival of emotions that had long slumbered, but never died; and the associations arising from the journey to Tubber Derg, had thrown them back, by the force of memory, almost to the period of her death. At times, indeed, their imagination had conjured her up strongly, but the present was an epoch in the history of their sorrow.

There is little more to be said. Sorrow was soon succeeded by cheerfulness and the glow of expected pleasure, which is ever the more delightful as the pleasure is pure. In about a week their old neighbours, with their carts and cars arrived; and before the day was closed on, which Owen removed to his new residence, he found himself once more sitting at his own hearth, among the friends of his youth, and the companions of his maturer years. Ere the twelvemonth elapsed, he had his house perfectly white, and as nearly resembling that of Tubber Derg in its better days as possible. About two years* ago we saw him one evening in the month of June, as he sat on a bench beside the door, singing with a happy heart his favourite song of "*Colleen dhas crootha na mo.*" It was about an hour before sunset. The house stood on a gentle eminence, beneath which a sweep of green meadow stretched away to the skirts of Tubber Derg. Around him was a country naturally fertile, and in spite of the national depression still beautiful to contemplate. Kathleen and two servant maids were milking, and the whole family were assembled about the door.

"Well, childhre," said the father, "didn't I tell yez

* It is unnecessary to add, that years have passed since this date was given.

the bitther mornin' we left Tubber Derg, not to cry or be disheartened—that 'there was a good God above, who might do something for us *yet?* I never *did* give up my trust in Him, an' I never *will*. You see, afther all our little troubles, He has wanst more brought us together, an' made us happy. Praise an' glory to His name!"

I looked at him as he spoke. He had raised his eyes to heaven, and a gleam of elevated devotion, perhaps worthy of being called sublime, irradiated his features. The sun, too, in setting, fell upon his broad temples and iron-gray locks, with a light solemn and religious. The effect to me, who knew his noble character, and all that he had suffered, was as if the eye of God then rested upon the decline of a a virtuous man's life with approbation;—as if he had lifted up the glory of his countenance upon him. Would that many of His thoughtless countrymen had been present! They might have blushed for their crimes, and been content to sit and learn wisdom at the feet of Owen M'Carthy.

THE PARTY FIGHT AND FUNERAL.

We ought, perhaps, to inform our readers that the connection between a party fight and funeral is sufficiently strong to justify the author in classing them under the title which is prefixed to each story. The one being naturally the result of the other, is made to proceed from it, as is, unhappily, too often the custom in real life among the Irish.

It has been long laid down as a universal principle, that self-preservation is the first law of nature. An Irishman, however, has nothing to do with this; he disposes of it as he does with the other laws, and washes his hands out of it altogether. But commend him to a fair, dance, funeral, or wedding, or to any other sport where there is a likelihood of getting his head or his bones broken, and if he survive, he will remember you with a kindness peculiar to himself, to the last day of his life—will drub you from head to heel if he finds that any misfortune has kept you out of a row beyond the usual period of three months—will render the same service to any of your friends that stand in need of it; or, in short, will go to the world's end, or fifty miles farther, as he himself would say, to serve you, provided you can procure him a bit of decent fighting. Now, in truth and soberness, it is difficult to account for this propensity, especially when the task of ascertaining it is assigned to those of another country, or even to those Irishmen whose rank in life places them too far from the customs, prejudices, and domestic opinions of their native peasantry, none of which can be properly known without mingling with them. To my own knowledge, however,

it proceeds in a great measure from *education*. And here I would beg leave to point out an omission of which the several boards of education have been guilty, and which, I believe, no one but myself has yet been sufficiently acute and philosophical to ascertain, as forming a *sine qua non* in the national instruction of the lower orders of Irishmen.

The cream of the matter is this :—a species of ambition prevails in the Green Isle, not known in any other country. It is an ambition of about three miles by four in extent; or, in other words, is bounded by the limits of the parish in which the subject of it may reside. It puts itself forth early in the character, and a hardy perennial it is. In my own case, its first development was noticed in the hedge-school which I attended. I had not been long there, till I was forced to declare myself either for the Caseys or the Murphys, two tiny factions, that had split the school between them. The day on which the ceremony of my declaration took place was a solemn one. After school, we all went to the bottom of a deep valley, a short distance from the school-house; up to the moment of my assembling there, I had not taken my stand under either banner: that of the Caseys was a sod of turf, stuck on the end of a broken fishing-rod —the eagle of the Murphys was a Cork red potato, hoisted in the same manner. The turf was borne by an urchin, who afterwards distinguished himself in fairs and markets as a *builla batthah** of the first grade, and from this circumstance he was nicknamed *Parrah Rackhan*.† The potato was borne by little Mickle M'Phauden Murphy, who afterwards took away Katty Bane Sheridan, without asking either her own consent or her father's. They were all then boys, it is true, but they gave a tolerable promise of that eminence which they subsequently attained.

When we arrived at the bottom of the glen, the Murphys and the Caseys, including their respective

* Cudgel-player. † Paddy the Rioter.

followers, ranged themselves on either side of a long line, which was drawn between the belligerent powers with the butt-end of one of the standards. Exactly on this line was I placed. The word was then put to me in full form—"Whether will you side with the dacent Murphys, or the blackguard Caseys?" "The potato for ever!" said I, throwing up my caubeen, and running over to the Murphy standard. In the twinkling of an eye we were at it; and in a short time the deuce an eye some of us had to twinkle. A battle royal succeeded, that lasted near half an hour, and it would probably have lasted above double the time, were it not for the appearance of the "master," who was seen by a little shrivelled *vidette*, who wanted an arm, and could take no part in the engagement. This was enough—we instantly radiated in all possible directions, so that by the time he had descended through the intricacies of the glen to the field of battle, neither victor nor vanquished was visible, except, perhaps, a straggler or two, as they topped the brow of the declivity, looking back over their shoulders, to put themselves out of doubt as to their visibility by the master. They seldom looked in vain, however; for there he usually stood, shaking up his rod, silently prophetic of its application on the following day. This threat, for the most part, ended in smoke; for except he horsed about forty or fifty of us, the infliction of impartial justice was utterly out of his power.

But besides this, there never was a realm in which the evils of a divided cabinet were more visible: the truth is, the monarch himself was under the influence of female government—an influence which he felt it either contrary to his inclination, or beyond his power to throw off. "Poor Norah, long may *you reign!*" we often used to exclaim, to the visible mortification of the "master," who felt the benevolence of the wish bottomed upon an indirect want of allegiance to himself. Well, it was a *touching* scene!—how we used to stand with the waistbands of our small-clothes cautiously grasped in our hands, with a timid show of

resistance, our brave red faces slobbered over with tears, as we stood marked for execution! Never was there a finer specimen of deprecation in eloquence than we then exhibited—the supplicating look right up into the master's face—the touching modulation of the whine—the additional tightness and caution with which we grasped the waistbands with one hand, when it was necessary to use the other in wiping our eyes and noses with the polished sleeve-cuff—the sincerity and vehemence with which we promised never to be guilty again, still shrewdly including the condition of present impunity for our offence:—"this—one—time—master, if ye plaise, sir;" and the utter hopelessness and despair which were legible in the last groan, as we grasped the "master's" leg in utter recklessness of judgment, were all perfect in their way. Reader, have you ever got a reprieve from the gallows? I beg pardon, my dear sir; I only meant to ask are you capable of entering into what a personage of that description might be supposed to feel, on being informed, after the knot had been neatly tied under the left ear, and the cap drawn over his eyes, that her majesty had granted him a full pardon? But you remember your own schoolboy days, and that's enough.

The nice discrimination with which Norah used to time her interference was indeed surprising. God help us! limited was our experience, and shallow our little judgments, or we might have known what the master meant, when, with the upraised arm hung over us, his eye was fixed upon the door of the kitchen, waiting for Norah's appearance.

Long, my fair and virtuous countrywomen, I repeat it to you all, as I did to Norah—may you reign in the hearts and affections of your husbands, (but nowhere else), the grace, ornaments, and happiness of their hearths and lives, you jewels, you! You are paragons of all that's good, and your feelings are highly creditable to yourselves and to humanity.

When Norah advanced, with her brawny uplifted arm, (for she was a powerful woman,) and forbidding

aspect, to interpose between us and the avenging terrors of the birch, do you think that she did not reflect honour on her sex and the national character? I sink the base allusion to the *miscaun** of fresh butter, which we had placed in her hands that morning, or the dish of eggs, or of meal, which we had either begged or stolen at home, as a present for her; disclaiming, at the same time, the rascally idea of giving it as a bribe or from any motive beneath the most lofty-minded and disinterested generosity on our part.

Then again, never did a forbidding face shine with so winning and amicable an expression as did hers on that merciful occasion. The sun dancing a hornpipe on Easter Sunday morning, or the full moon sailing as proud as a peacock in a new halo head-dress, was a very disrespectable sight, compared to Norah's red beaming face, shrouded in her dowd cap with long ears, that descended to her masculine and substantial neck. Owing to her influence, the whole economy of the school was good; for we were permitted to cuff one another, and do whatever we pleased, with impunity, *if* we brought the meal, eggs, or butter; except some scapegoat who was not able to accomplish this, and he generally received on his own miserable carcase what was due to us all.

Poor Jack Murray! His last words on the scaffold, for being concerned in the murder of Pierce the gauger, were, that he got the first of his bad habits under Pat Mulligan and Norah—that he learned to steal by secreting at home butter and meal to paste the master's eyes to his bad conduct—and that his fondness for quarrelling arose from being permitted to head a faction at school; a most ungrateful return for the many acts of grace which the indulgence of Norah caused to be issued in his favour.

I was but a short time under Pat, when, after the general example, I had my cudgel, which I used to carry regularly to a certain furze bush within fifty

* A portion of butter, weighing from one pound to six or eight, made in the shape of a prism.

perches of the "seminary," where I hid it till after "dismiss." I grant it does not look well in me to become my own panegyrist; but I can at least declare that there were few among the Caseys able to resist the prowess of this right arm, puny as it was at the period in question. Our battles were obstinate and frequent; but as the quarrels of the two families and their relations on each side were as bitter and pugnacious in fairs and markets as ours were in school, we hit upon the plan of holding our Lilliputian engagements upon the same days on which our fathers and brothers contested. According to this plan, it very often happened that the corresponding parties were successful, and, as frequently, that whilst the Caseys were well drubbed in the fair, their sons were victorious at school, and *vice versa*.

For my part, I was early trained to cudgelling, and before I reached my fourteenth year, could pronounce as sage and accurate an opinion upon the merits of a *shillelagh*, as it is called, or cudgel, as a veteran of sixty could at first sight. Our plan of preparing them was this: we sallied out to any place where there was an underwood of blackthorn or oak, and, having surveyed the premises with the eye of a connoisseur, we selected the straightest root-growing piece which we could find: for if not root-growing, we did not consider it worth cutting, knowing, from experience, that a mere branch, how straight and fair soever it might look, would be apt to snap in the twist and tug of war. Having cut it as close to the root as possible, we then lopped off the branches, and put it up in the chimney to season. When seasoned, we took it down, and wrapping it in brown paper, well steeped in hog's lard or oil, we buried it in a horse dunghill, paying it a daily visit for the purpose of making it straight by doubling back the bends or angles across the knee, in a direction contrary to their natural tendency. Having daily repeated this until we had made it straight, and renewed the oiled wrapping paper until the staff was perfectly saturated, we then rubbed it well with

a woollen cloth, containing a little black-lead and grease, to give it a polish. This was the last process, except that, if we thought it too light at the top, we used to bore a hole in the lower end with a red-hot iron spindle, into which we poured melted lead, for the purpose of giving it the knock-down weight.

There were very few of Paddy Mulligan's scholars without a choice collection of such cudgels, and scarcely one who had not, before his fifteenth year, a just claim to be called the hero of a hundred fights, and the heritor of as many bumps on the cranium as would strike both Gall and Spurzheim speechless.

Now this, be it known, was, and in some districts yet is, an integral part of an Irish peasant's *education*. In the northern parts of Ireland, where the population of Catholics on the one side, and of Protestants and Dissenters on the other, is nearly equal, I have known the respective scholars of Catholic and Protestant schools to challenge each other, and meet half-way to do battle, in vindication of their respective creeds; or for the purpose of establishing the character of their respective masters as the more learned man; for if we were to judge by the nature of the education then received, we would be led to conclude that a more commercial nation than Ireland was not on the face of the earth, it being the indispensable part of every scholars business to become acquainted with the *three sets of Book-keeping*.

The boy who was the handiest and the most daring with the cudgel at Paddy Mulligan's school was Denis Kelly, the son of a wealthy farmer in the neighbourhood. He was a rash, hot-tempered, good-natured lad, possessing a more than common share of this blackthorn ambition; on which account he was cherished by his relations as a boy that was likely at a future period to be able to walk over the course of the parish, in fair, market, or patron. He certainly grew up a stout, able, young fellow; and before he reached nineteen years, was unrivalled at the popular exercises of the peasantry. Shortly after that time

he made his *debut* in a party-quarrel, which took place in one of the Chistmas *Margamores* *, and fully sustained the anticipations which were formed of him by his relations. For a year or two afterwards no quarrel was fought without him; and his prowess rose until he had gained the very pinnacle of that ambition which he had determined to reach. About this time I was separated from him, having found it necessary, in order to accomplish my objects in life, to reside with a relation in another part of the country.

The period of my absence, I believe, was about fifteen years, during which space I heard no account of him whatever. At length, however, that inextinguishable attachment which turns the affections and memory to the friends of our early days—to those scenes which we traversed when the heart was light and the spirits buoyant—determined me to make a visit to my native place, that I might witness the progress of time and care upon those faces that were once so familiar to me: that I might again look upon the meadows, and valleys, and groves, and mountains, where I had so often played, and to which I still found myself bound by a tie that a more enlightened view of life and nature only made stronger and more enduring. I accordingly set off, and arrived late in the evening of a December day, at a little town within a few miles of my native home. On alighting from the coach and dining, I determined to walk home, as it was a fine frosty night. The full moon hung in the blue unclouded firmament in all her lustre, and the stars shone out with that tremulous twinkling motion, so peculiarly remarkable in frost. I had been absent, I said, about fifteen years, and felt that the enjoyment of this night would form an era in the records of my memory and my feelings. I find myself indeed utterly incapable of expressing what I experienced; but those who have

* Big markets.

ever been in similar circumstances will understand what I mean. A strong spirit of practical poetry and romance was upon me; and I thought that a common-place approach in the open day would have rendered my return to the scenes of my early life a very stale and unedifying matter.

I left the inn at seven o'clock, and as I had only five miles to walk, I would just arrive about nine, allowing myself to saunter on at the rate of two miles and a half per hour. My sensations, indeed, as I went along, were singular; and as I took a solitary road that went across the mountains, the loneliness of the walk, the deep gloom of the valleys, the towering height of the dark hills, and the pale silvery light of a sleeping lake, shining dimly in the distance below, gave me such a distinct notion of the sublime and beautiful, as I have seldom since experienced. I recommend every man who has been fifteen years absent from his native fields to return by moonlight.

Well, there is a mystery yet undiscovered in our being, for no man can know the full extent of his feelings or his capacities. Many a slumbering thought, and sentiment, and association reposes within him, of which he is utterly ignorant, and which, except he come in contact with those objects whose influence over his mind can alone call them into being, may never be awakened, or give him one moment of either pleasure or pain. There is, therefore, a great deal in the position which we hold in society, and simply in situation. I felt this on *that* night: for the tenor of my reflections was new and original, and my feelings had a warmth and freshness in them, which nothing but the situation in which I then found myself could give them. The force of association, too, was powerful; for as I advanced nearer home, the names of hills, and lakes, and mountains, that I had uttely forgotten, as I thought, were distinctly revived in my memory; and a crowd of youthful thoughts and feelings, that I imagined my intercourse with the world

and the finger of time had blotted out of my being, began to crowd afresh on my fancy. The name of a townland would instantly return with its appearance; and I could now remember the history of families and individuals that had long been effaced from my recollection.

But what is even more singular is, that the superstitious terrors of my boyhood began to come over me as formerly, whenever a spot noted for supernatural appearances met my eye. It was in vain that I exerted myself to expel them, by throwing the barrier of philosophic reasoning in their way; they still clung to me, in spite of every effort to the contrary. But the fact is, that I was, for the moment, the slave of a morbid and feverish sentiment, that left me completely at the mercy of the dark and fleeting images that passed over my fancy. I now came to a turn where the road began to slope down into the depths of a valley that ran across it. When I looked forward into the bottom of it, all was darkness impenetrable, for the moon-beams were thrown off by the height of the mountains that rose on each side of it. I felt an indefinite sensation of fear, because at that moment I recollected that it had been, in my younger days, notorious as the scene of an apparition, where the spirit of a murdered pedlar had never been known to permit a solitary traveller to pass without appearing to him, and walking cheek-by-jowl with him to the next house on the way, at which spot he usually vanished. The influence of my feelings, or, I should rather say, the physical excitement of my nerves, was by no means slight, as these old traditions recurred to me; although, at the same time, my moral courage was perfectly unimpaired, so that, notwithstanding this involuntary apprehension, I felt a degree of novelty and curiosity in descending the valley; "If it appear," said I, "I shall at least satisfy myself as to the truth of apparitions."

My dress consisted of a long, dark surtout, the collar of which, as the night was keen, I had turned

up about my ears, and the corners of it met round my face. In addition to this I had a black silk handkerchief tied across my mouth to keep out the night air, so that, as my dark fur travelling-cap came down over my face, there was very little of my countenance visible. I now had advanced half way into the valley, and all about me was dark and still: the moon-light was not nearer than the top of the hill which I was descending; and I often turned round to look upon it, so silvery and beautiful it appeared in the distance. Sometimes I stopped for a few moments, admiring its effect, and contemplating the dark mountains as they stood out against the firmament, then kindled into magnificent grandeur by the myriads of stars that glowed in its expanse. There was perfect silence and solitude around me; and, as I stood alone in the dark chamber of the mountains, I felt the impressiveness of the situation gradually supersede my terrors. A sublime sense of religious awe descended on me; my soul kindled into a glow of solemn and elevated devotion, which gave me a more intense perception of the presence of God than I had ever before experienced. "How sacred—how awful," thought I, "is this place!—how impressive is this hour!—surely I feel myself at the footstool of God! The voice of worship is in this deep, soul-thrilling silence, and the tongue of praise speaks, as it were, from the very solitude of the mountains!" I then thought of Him who went up into a mountain-top to pray, and felt the majesty of those admirable descriptions of the Almighty, given in the Old Testament, blend in delightful harmony with the beauty and fitness of the Christian dispensation, that brought life and immortality to light. "Here," said I, "do I feel that I am indeed immortal, and destined for scenes of a more exalted and comprehensive existence!"

I then proceeded further into the valley, completely freed from the influence of old and superstitious associations. A few perches below me a small river crossed the road, over which was thrown a little stone

bridge of rude workmanship. This bridge was the spot on which the apparition was said to appear; and as I approached it, I felt the folly of those terrors which had only a few minutes before beset me so strongly. I found my moral energies recruited, and the dark phantasms of my imagination dispelled, by the light of religion, which had refreshed me with a deep sense of the Almighty presence. I accordingly walked forward, scarcely bestowing a thought upon the history of the place, and had got within a few yards of the bridge, when on resting my eye accidentally upon the little elevation formed by its rude arch, I perceived a black coffin placed at the edge of the road, exactly upon the bridge itself!

It may be evident to the reader, that, however satisfactory the force of philosophical reasoning might have been upon the subject of the solitude, I was too much the creature of sensation for an hour before, to look on such a startling object with firm nerves. For the first two or three minutes, therefore, I exhibited as finished a specimen of the dastardly as could be imagined. My hair absolutely raised my cap some inches off my head; my mouth opened to an extent which I did not conceive it could possibly reach; I thought my eyes shot out from their sockets, and my fingers spread out and became stiff, though powerless. The "*obstupui*" was perfectly realized in me, for, with the exception of a single groan, which I gave on first seeing the object, I found that if one word would save my life, or transport me to my own fireside, I could not utter it. I was also rooted to the earth, as if by magic; and although instant tergiversation and flight had my most hearty concurrence, I could not move a limb, nor even raise my eyes off the sepulchral-looking object which lay before me. I now felt the perspiration fall from my face in torrents, and the strokes of my heart fell audibly on my ear. I even attempted to say "God preserve me!" but my tongue was dumb and powerless, and could not move. My eye was still upon the coffin, when I perceived that from being

motionless it instantly began to swing,—first in a lateral, then in a longitudinal direction, although it was perfectly evident that no human hand was nearer it than my own. At length I raised my eyes off it, for my vision was strained to an aching intensity, which I thought must have occasioned my eye-strings to crack. I looked instinctively about me for assistance —but all was dismal, silent, and solitary: even the moon had disappeared among a few clouds that I had not noticed in the sky.

As I stood in this state of indescribable horror, I saw the light gradually fade away from the tops of the mountains, giving the scene around me a dim and spectral ghastliness, which to those who were never in such a situation, is altogether inconceivable.

At length I thought I heard a noise as it were of a rushing tempest, sweeping from the hills down into the valley; but, on looking up, I could perceive nothing but the dusky desolation that brooded over the place. Still the noise continued; again I saw the coffin move; I then felt the motion communicated to myself, and found my body borne and swung backwards and forwards, precisely according to the motion of the coffin. I again attempted to utter a cry for assistance, but could not; the motion in my body still continued, as did the approaching noise in the hills. I looked up a second time in the direction in which the valley wound off between them, but, judge of what I must have suffered, when I beheld one of the mountains moving, as it were, from its base, and tumbling down towards the spot on which I stood! In the twinkling of an eye the whole scene, hills and all, began to tremble, to vibrate, and to fly round me, with a rapid, delirious motion; the stars shot back into the depths of heaven, and disappeared; the ground on which I stood began to pass from beneath my feet; a noise like the breaking of a thousand gigantic billows again burst from every direction, and I found myself instantly overwhelmed by some deadly weight, which prostrated me on the earth, and deprived me of sense and motion.

I know not how long I continued in this state; but I remember that, on opening my eyes, the first object that presented itself to me was the sky glowing as before with ten thousand stars, and the moon walking in her unclouded brightness through the heavens. The whole circumstance then rushed back upon my mind, but with a sense of horror very much diminished; I arose, and on looking towards the spot, perceived the coffin in the same place. I then stood, and endeavouring to collect myself, viewed it as calmly as possible; it was, however, as motionless and distinct as when I first saw it. I now began to reason upon the matter, and to consider that it was pusillanimous in me to give way to such boyish terrors. The confidence, also, which my heart, only a short time before this, had experienced in the presence and protection of the Almighty, again returned, and, along with it, a degree of religious fortitude, which invigorated my whole system. "Well," thought I, "in the name of God I will ascertain what you are, let the consequence be what it may." I then advanced until I stood exactly over it, and raising my foot, gave it a slight kick. "Now," said I, "nothing remains but to ascertain whether it contains a dead body or not;" but on raising the end of it, I perceived by its lightness that it was empty. To investigate the cause of its being left in this solitary spot was, however, not within the compass of my philosophy, so I gave that up. On looking at it more closely, I noticed a plate, marked with the name and age of the person for whom it was intended, and on bringing my eyes near the letters, I was able, between fingering and reading, to make out the name of my old cudgel-fighting school-fellow, Denis Kelly.

This discovery threw a partial light upon the business; but I now remembered to have heard of individuals who had seen black, unearthly coffins, inscribed with the names of certain living persons; and that these were considered as ominous of the death of those persons. I accordingly determined to

be certain that this was a real coffin; and as Denis's house was not more than a mile before me, I decided on carrying it that far: "If he be dead," thought I, "it will be all right, and if not, we will see more about it." My mind, in fact, was diseased by terror. I instantly raised the coffin, and as I found a rope lying on the ground under it, I strapped it about my shoulders and proceeded: nor could I help smiling when I reflected upon the singular transition which the man of sentiment and sensation so strangely underwent; from the sublime contemplation of the silent mountain solitude and the spangled heavens to the task of carrying a coffin! It was an adventure, however, and I was resolved to see how it would terminate.

There was from the bridge an ascent in the road, not so gradual as that by which I descended on the other side; and as the coffin was rather heavy, I began to repent of having anything to do with it; for I was by no means experienced in carrying coffins. The carriage of it was, indeed, altogether an irksome and unpleasant concern; for owing to my ignorance of using the rope and tying it skilfully, it was every moment sliding down my back, dragging along the stones, or bumping against my heels: besides I saw no sufficient grounds I had for entering upon the ludicrous and odd employment of carrying another man's coffin, and was several times upon the point of washing my hands out of it altogether. But the novelty of the incident, and the mystery in which it was involved, decided me in bringing it as far as Kelly's house, which was exactly on my way home.

I had yet half a mile to go; but I thought it would be best to strap it more firmly about my body before I could start again: I therefore set it standing on its end, just at the turn of the road, until I should breathe a little, for I was rather exhausted by a trudge under it of half a mile and upwards. Whilst the coffin was in this position, I standing exactly behind it (Kelly had been a tall man, consequently it was somewhat higher than I was), a crowd of people, bearing

lights, advanced round the corner; and the first object which presented itself to their vision was the coffin in that position, whilst I was totally invisible behind it. As soon as they saw it, there was an involuntary cry of consternation from the whole crowd; at this time I had the coffin once more strapped firmly by a running knot to my shoulders, so that I could loose it whenever I pleased. On seeing the party, and hearing certain expressions which dropped from them, I knew at once that there had been some unlucky blunder in the business on their part; and I would have given a good deal to be out of the circumstances in which I then stood. I felt that I could not possibly have accounted for my situation without bringing myself in for as respectable a portion of rank cowardice as those who ran away from the coffin; for that it was left behind in a fit of terror, I now entertained no doubt whatever, particularly when I remembered the traditions connected with the spot in which I found it.

"*Manim a Yea agus a wurrah!*"* exclaimed one of them, "if the black man hasn't brought it up from the bridge! *Dher a larna heena*†, he did; for it was above the bridge we first seen him: jist for all the world—the Lord be about us—as Anthony and me war coming out on the road at the bridge, there he was standing—a headless man, all black, widout face or eyes upon him—and then we left the coffin and cut acrass the fields home."

"But where is he now, Eman?" said one of them, "are you sure you seen him?"

"Seen him!" both exclaimed, "do you think we'd take to our scrapers like two hares, only we did; arrah, bad manners to you, do you think the coffin could walk up wid itself from the bridge to this, only he brought it?—isn't that enough?

* My soul to God and the Virgin.

† By the *very book*—meaning the Bible, which, in the Irish, is not simply called *the* book, but the *very* book, or the book *itself*.

"Thrue for yez," the rest exclaimed, "but what's to be done?"

"Why to bring the coffin home, now that we're all together," another observed; "they say he never appears to more than two at wanst, so he won't be apt to show himself now, when we're together."

"Well, boys, let two of you go down to it," said one of them, "and we'll wait here till yez bring it up."

"Yes," said Eman Dhu, "do you go down, Owen, and Billy M'Shane, here, will go along wid you."

During this conversation, I had resolved, if possible, to keep up the delusion, until I could get myself extricated with due secrecy out of this ridiculous situation; and I was glad to find that, owing to their cowardice, there was some likelihood of effecting my design.

"Ned," said one of them to a little man, "go down and speak to it, as it can't harm *you*."

"Why, sure," said Ned, with a tremour in his voice, "I can speak to it where I am, widout going within rache of it. Boys, stay close to me—hem."

"Very well," the rest replied; "try that, Ned; give it the best and ginteelest grammar you have, and maybe it may thrate us dacent."

"Ned," said they, "ax it does anything trouble it."

"Wouldn't it be betther," observed another "to ax it who murdhered it; maybe it wants to discover that?"

"In the na-me of—Go-o-d-ness," said Ned, down to me, "what are you?"

To this I made no reply.

"I say," continued Ned, "in—the—name—of—G-o-o-d-ness—who was it—that took the liberty of murdhering you, dacent man?"

"Ned Corrigan," I answered, giving his own name.

"Hem! God presarve us! Ned Corrigan!" he exclaimed. "What Ned, for there's two of them—Is it myself, or the *other* vagabone?"

"Yourself, you murderer!" I replied.

"Ho!" said Ned, getting quite stout, "is that you,

neighbour? Come, now walk out wid yourself out of that coffin, you vagabone you, whoever you are."

"What do you mane, Ned, by spaking to it that-a-way?" the rest inquired.

"Hut," said Ned, "it's some fellow or other that's playing a thrick upon us. Sure I never knew either act nor part of the murdher, nor of the murdherers; and you know, if it was anything of that nature, it couldn't tell me a lie."

"Big tare-an'-ouns!" said the rest; "if we thought it was any man making fun of us, but we'd crop the ears off his head, to tache him to be joking!"

To tell the truth, when I heard this suggestion, I began to repent of my frolic; but I was determined to make another effort to finish the adventure creditably.

"Ned," said they, "we'll go down and examine it in a body."

They then began to approach the coffin at dead-march time, and I felt that this was the only moment in which my plan could succeed; for had I waited until they came down, all would have been discovered. As soon, therefore, as they began to move towards me, I also began, with equal solemnity, to retrograde towards *them*; so that, as the coffin was between us, it seemed to move without human means.

"Stop, for God's sake, stop," shouted Ned; "it's movin'! It has made the coffin alive; don't you see it travelling this way widout hand or foot, barring the boords?"

There was now a halt to ascertain the fact; but I still retrograded. This was sufficient: a cry of terror broke from the whole group, and without waiting for further evidence, they set off in the direction they came from, at full speed. Never was there so complete a discomfiture; and so eager were they to escape, that several of them came down on the stones; and I could hear them shouting with desperation, and imploring the more advanced not to leave them behind. I instantly disentangled myself from the coffin,

and left it standing exactly in the middle of the road, for the next passenger to give it a lift as far as Denis Kelly's, if he felt so disposed. I lost no time in making the best of my way home; and on passing poor Denis's house I perceived, by the bustle and noise within, that he was dead.

I had given my friends no notice of this visit; my reception was consequently the warmer, as I was not expected. That evening was a happy one, which I shall long remember. At supper I alluded to Kelly, and received from my brother a full account, as given in the following narrative, of the circumstances which caused his death.

"I need not remind you, Toby, of your schoolboy days, nor of the principles usually imbibed at such schools as that in which the two tiny factions of the Caseys and the Murphys qualified themselves, among the latter of whom you cut so distinguished a figure. You will not, therefore, be surprised to hear that these two factions are as bitter as ever; and that the boys who at Pat Mulligan's school belaboured each other, in imitation of their brothers and fathers, continue to set the same iniquitous example to their children; so that this groundless and hereditary enmity is likely to descend to future generations; unless, indeed, the influence of a more enlightened system of education may check it. But, unhappily, there is a strong suspicion of the object proposed by such a system; so that the advantages likely to result from it to the lower orders of the people will be slow and distant."

"But, John," said I, "now that we are upon that subject, let me ask what really *is* the bone of contention between Irish factions."

"I assure you," he replied, "I am almost as much at a loss, Toby, to give you a satisfactory answer, as if you asked me the elevation of the highest mountain on the moon; and I believe you would find equal difficulty in ascertaining the cause of their feuds from the factions themselves. I really am convinced they

know not, nor, if I rightly understand them, do they much care. Their object is to fight, and the turning of a straw will at any time furnish them with sufficient grounds for that. I do not think, after all, that the enmity between them is purely personal: they do not hate each other individually; but having originally had one quarrel upon some trifling occasion, the beaten party cannot bear the stigma of defeat without another trial of strength. Then, if they succeed, the *onus* of retrieving lost credit is thrown upon the party that was formerly victorious. If they fail a second time, the double triumph of their conquerors excites them to a greater determination to throw off the additional disgrace; and this species of alternation perpetuates the evil.

"These habits, however, familiarise our peasantry to acts of outrage and violence—the bad passions are cultivated and nourished, until crimes, which peaceable men look upon with fear and horror, lose their real magnitude and deformity in the eyes of Irishmen. I believe this kind of undefined hatred between either parties or nations, is the most dangerous and fatal spirit which can pervade any portion of society. If you hate a man for an obvious and palpable injury; it is likely that when he cancels that injury by an act of subsequent kindness, accompanied by an exhibition of sincere sorrow, you will cease to look upon him as your enemy; but where the hatred is such that, while feeling it, you cannot, on a sober examination of your heart, account for it, there is little hope that you will ever be able to stifle the enmity which you entertain against him. This, however, in politics and religion, is what is frequently designated as principle—a word on which men, possessing higher and greater advantages than the poor ignorant peasantry of Ireland, pride themselves. In sects and parties, we may mark its effects among all ranks and nations. I, therefore, seldom wish, Toby, to hear a man assert that he is of this party or that, from *principle*; for

I am usually inclined to suspect that he is not, in this case, influenced by *conviction*.

"Kelly was a man who, but for these scandalous proceedings among us, might have been now alive and happy. Although his temperament was warm, yet that warmth communicated itself to his good as well as to his evil qualities. In the beginning his family were not attached to any faction—and when I use the word *faction*, it is in contradistinction to the word *party*—for faction, you know, is applied to a feud or grudge between Roman Catholics exclusively. But when he was young, he ardently attached himself to the Murphys; and, having continued among them until manhood, he could not abandon them, consistently with that sense of mistaken honour which forms so prominent a feature in the character of the Irish peasantry. But although the Kellys were not *faction-men*, they were bitter *party-men*, being the ringleaders of every quarrel which took place between the Catholics and Protestants, or, I should rather say between the Orangemen and Whiteboys.

"From the moment Denis attached himself to the Murphys, until the day he received the beating which subsequently occasioned his death, he never withdrew from them. He was in all their battles; and in course of time, induced his relations to follow his example; so that, by general consent, they were nicknamed 'the Errigle Slashers.' Soon after you left the country, and went to reside with my uncle, Denis married a daughter of little Dick Magrath's, from the Race-road, with whom he got a little money. She proved a kind, affectionate wife; and, to do him justice, I believe he was an excellent husband. Shortly after his marriage his father died, and Denis succeeded him in his farm; for you know that, among the peasantry, the youngest generally gets the landed property—the elder children being obliged to provide for themselves according to their ability, as otherwise a population would multiply upon a portion of land inadequate to its support.

"It was supposed that Kelly's marriage would have been the means of producing a change in him for the better, but it did not. He was, in fact, the slave of a low, vain ambition, which constantly occasioned him to have some quarrel or other on his hands; and, as he possessed great physical courage and strength, he became the champion of the parish. It was in vain that his wife used every argument to induce him to relinquish such practices; the only reply he was in the habit of making, was a good-humoured slap on the back and a laugh, saying,

"'That's it, Honor; sure and isn't that the Magraths, all over, that would let the manest spalpeen that ever chewed cheese thramp upon them, without raising a hand in their own defence; and I don't blame you for being a coward, seeing that you have their blood in your veins—not but that there ought to be something betther in you, afther all; for it's the M'Karrons, by your mother's side, that had the good dhrop of their own in them, anyhow—but your'e a Magrath, out and out.'

"'And, Denis,' Honor would reply, 'it would be a blessed day for the parish if all in it were as peaceable as the same Magraths. There would be no sore heads, nor broken bones, nor fighting, nor slashing of one another in fairs and markets, when people ought to be minding their business. You're ever and always at the Magraths, bekase they don't join you agin the Caseys or the Orangemen, and more fools they'd be to make or meddle between you, having no spite agin either of them; and it would be wiser for you to be *sed* by the Magraths, and *red* your hands out of sich ways altogether. What did ever the Murphys do to sarve you or any of your family, that you'd go to make a great man of yourself fighting for them? Or, what did the poor Caseys do to make you go agin the honest people? Arrah, bad manners to me, if you know what you're about, or if *sonse** or grace can ever come of it;

* Good luck.

and mind my words, Denis, if God hasn't sed it, you'll live to rue your folly for the same work.'

"At this Denis would laugh heartily. 'Well said, Honor *Magrath*, but not *Kelly*. Well, it's one comfort that our childher aren't likely to follow your side of the house, anyway. Come here, Lanty; come over, acushla, to your father! Lanty, ma bouchal, what 'ill you do when you grow a man?'

"'I'll buy a horse of my own to ride on, daddy.'

"'A horse, Lanty! and so you will, ma bouchal; but that's not it—sure that's not what I mane, Lanty. What 'ill you do to the Caseys?'

"'Ho, ho! the Caseys! I'll bate the blackguards wid your blackthorn, daddy!'

"'Ha, ha, ha! that's my stout man, my brave little soger! *Wus dha lamh, avick!—give me your hand, my son!* Here, Nelly,' he would say to the child's eldest sister, 'give him a brave whang of bread, to make him able to bate the Caseys. Well, Lanty, who more will you leather, a-hagur?'

"'All the Orangemen; I'll kill all the Orangemen!'

"This would produce another laugh from the father, who would again kiss and shake hands with his son, for these early manifestations of his own spirit.

"'Lanty, ma bouchal,' he would say, 'thank God, you're not a *Magrath;* 'tis you that's a *Kelly*, every blessed inch of you! and if you turn out as good a *buillagh batthah* as your father afore you, I'll be contint, avourneen!'

"'God forgive you, Denis,' the wife would reply, 'it's long before you'd think of larning him his prayers, or his catechiz, or anything that's good! Lanty, agra, come over to myself, and never heed what that man says; for, except you have some poor body's blessing, he'll bring you to no good.'

"Sometimes, however, Kelly's own natural good sense, joined with the remonstrances of his wife, prevailed for a short time, and he would withdraw himself from the connexion altogether; but the force of habit and of circumstances was too strong in him to

hope that he could ever overcome it by his own firmness, for he was totally destitute of religion. The peaceable intervals of his life were therefore very short.

"One summer evening I was standing in my own garden, when I saw a man galloping up towards me at full speed. When he approached, I recognised him as one of the Murphy faction, and perceived that he was cut and bleeding.

"'Murphy,' said I, 'what's the matter?'

"'Hard fighting, sir,' said he, 'is the matter. The Caseys gathered all their faction, bekase they heard that Denis Kelly has given us up, and they're sweeping the street wid us. I'm going hot foot for Kelly, sir, for even the very name of him will turn the tide in our favour. Along wid that, I have sint in a score of the Duggans, and, if I get in Denis, plase God we'll clear the town of them!'

"He then set off, but pulled up abruptly, and said,

"'Arrah, Mr. Darcy, maybe you'd be civil enough to lind me the loan of a sword, or bagnet, or gun, or anything that way, that would be sarviceable to a body on a pinch?'

"'Yes!' said I, 'and enable you to commit murder? No, no, Murphy; I'm sorry it's not in my power to put a final stop to such dangerous quarrels!'

"He then dashed off, and in the course of a short time I saw him and Kelly, both on horseback, hurrying into the town in all possible haste, armed with their cudgels. The following day, I got my dog and gun, and sauntered about the hills, making a point to call upon Kelly. I found him with his head tied up, and his arm in a sling.

"'Well, Denis,' said I, 'I find you have kept your promise of giving up quarrels!'

"'And so I did, sir,' said Denis; 'but, sure you wouldn't have me for to go desart them, when the Caseys war three to one over them? No; God be thanked, I'm not so mane as that, anyhow. Besides, they welted both my brothers within an inch of their lives,'

"'You may well say they did not, sir,' he replied; 'and, to tell God's thruth, they thrashed us right and left out of the town, although we rallied three times, and came in agin. At any rate, it's the first time for the last five years that they dare go up and down the street, calling out for the face of a Murphy, or a Kelly; for they're as bitter now agin *us* as agin the Murphys themselves.'

"'Well, I hope, Denis,' I observed, 'that what occurred yesterday will prevent you from entering into their quarrels in future. Indeed, I shall not give over until I prevail on you to lead a quiet and peaceable life, as the father of a rising family ought to do.'

"'Denis,' said the wife, when I alluded to the children, looking at him with a reproachful and significant expression—'Denis, do you hear *that*—the *father* of a family, Denis! Oh, then, God look down on that family; but it's—Musha, God bless you and yours, sir,' said she to me, dropping that part of the subject abruptly; 'it's kind of you to trouble yourself about him, at all at all: it's what them that has a better right to do it, doesn't do.'

"'I hope,' said I, 'that Denis's own good sense will show him the folly and guilt of his conduct, and that he will not, under any circumstances, enter into their battles in future. Come, Denis, will you promise me this?'

"'If any man,' replied Denis, 'could make me do it it's yourself, sir, or any one of your family; but, if the priest of the parish was to go down on his knees before me, I wouldn't give it up till we give them vagabone Caseys one glorious battherin', which, plase God, we'll do, and are well able to do, before a month of Sundays goes over us. Now, sir, you needn't say another word,' seeing me about to speak; 'for by Him that made me we'll do it! If any man, I say, could persuade me agin it, you could; but if we don't pay them full interest for what we got, why, my name's not Denis Kelly—ay, sweep them like varmint out of the town, body and sleeves!'

"I saw argument would be lost on him, so I only observed, that I feared it would eventually end badly.

"'Och, many and many's the time, Mr. Darcy,' said Honor, 'I prophesied the same thing; and if God hasn't said it, he'll be coming home a corpse to me some day or other; for he got as much bating, sir, as would be enough to kill a horse; and to tell you God's truth, sir, he's breeding up his childher—'

"'Honor,' said Kelly, irritated, 'whatever I do, do I lave it in your power to say that I'm a bad husband? so don't *rise* me by your talk, for I don't like to be provoked. I *know* it's wrong, but what can I do? Would you have me for to show the *Garran-bane**, and lave them like a cowardly thraitor, now that the other faction is coming up to be their match? No: let what will come of it, I'll never do the mane thing—death before dishonour!'

"In this manner Kelly went on for years; sometimes, indeed, keeping quiet for a short period, but eventually drawn in, from the apprehension of being reproached with want of honour and truth to his connexion. This, truly, is an imputation which no peasant could endure; nor, were he thought capable of treachery, would he be safe from the vengeance of his own party. Many a time have I seen Kelly reeling home, his head and face sadly cut, the blood streaming from him, and his wife and some neighbour on each side of him—the poor woman weeping and deploring the senseless and sanguinary feuds in which her husband took so active a part.

"About three miles from this, down at the Long Ridge, where the Shannons live, dwelt a family of the Grogans, cousins to Denis. They were anything but industrious, although they might have lived very independently, having held a farm on what they call an *old take*, which means a long lease taken out when the lands were cheap. It so happened, however, that,

*The white horse, *i.e.* be wanting in mettle. Tradition affirms that James the Second escaped on a white horse from the battle of the Boyne; and from this circumstance a white horse has become the emblem of cowardice.

like too many of their countrymen, they paid little attention to the cultivation of their farm; the consequence of which neglect was, that they became embarrassed, and overburdened with arrears. Their landlord was old Sam Simmons, whose only fault to his tenants was an excess of indulgence, and a generous disposition wherever he could possibly get an opportunity to scatter his money about him, upon the spur of a benevolence which, it would seem, never ceased goading him to acts of the most Christian liberality and kindness. Along with these excellent qualities, he was remarkable for a most rooted aversion to law and lawyers; for he would lose one hundred pounds rather than recover that sum by any legal proceedings, even when certain that five pounds would effect it; but he seldom or never was known to pardon a breach of the peace.

"I have always found that an *excess* of indulgence in a landlord never fails ultimately to injure and relax the industry of the tenant; at least, this was the effect which *his* forbearance produced on them. But the most extraordinary good-nature has its limits, and so had his; after repeated warning, and the most unparalleled patience on his part, he was at length compelled to determine on at once removing them from his estate, and letting his land to some more deserving tenant. He accordingly desired them to remove their property from the premises, as he did not wish, he said, to leave them without the means of entering upon another farm, if they felt so disposed. This they refused to do: adding, that they would, at least, put him to the expense of ejecting them. He then gave orders to his agent to seize; but they, in the mean time, had secreted their effects by night among their friends and relations, sending a cow to this one and a horse to that; so that when the bailiff came to levy his execution, he found very little, except the empty walls. They were, however, ejected without ceremony, and driven altogether off the farm, for which they had actually paid nothing for the three preceding years. In the mean time the farm was ad-

vertised to be let, and several persons had offered themselves as tenants; but what appeared very remarkable was, that the Roman Catholics seldom came a second time to make any further inquiry about it; or, if they did, Simmons observed that they were sure to withdraw their proposals, and ultimately decline having anything to do with it.

"This was a circumstance which he could not properly understand; but the fact was that the peasantry were almost to a man members of a widely-extending system of agrarian combination, the secret influence of which intimidated such of their own religion as intended to take it, and prevented them from exposing themselves to the penalty which they knew those who should dare to occupy it must pay. In a short time, however, the matter began to be whispered about, until it spread gradually, day after day, through the parish, that those who had already proposed, or intended to propose, were afraid to enter upon the land on any terms. Hitherto, it is true, these threats floated about only in the vague form of rumours.

"The farm had now been unoccupied for about a year; party spirit ran very high among the peasantry, and no proposals came in, or were at all likely to come. Simmons then got advertisements printed, and had them posted up in the most conspicuous parts of this and the neighbouring parishes. It was expected, however, that they would be torn down; but, instead of that, there was a written notice posted up immediately under each, which ran in the following words:—

"'TAKE NOTESS.

"'*Any man that'll dare to take the farm belonging to smooth Sam Simmons, aud sitivated at the long ridge, will be flayed alive.*

"'MAT MIDNIGHT.

"'B.N.—*It's it that was latterrally occupied by the Grogans.*"

"This occasioned Simmons and the other magistrates of the barony to hold a meeting, at which they

subscribed to the amount of fifty pounds as a reward for discovering the author or authors of the threatening notice; but the advertisement containing the reward, which was posted in the usual places through the parish, was torn down on the first night after it was put up. In the meantime, a man, nicknamed Vengeance—Vesey Vengeance, in consequence of his daring and fearless spirit, and his bitterness in retaliating injury—came to Simmons, and proposed for the farm. The latter candidly mentioned the circumstances of the notice, and fairly told him that he was running a personal risk in taking it.

"'Leave that to me, sir,' said Vengeance; 'if you will set me the farm at the terms I offer, I am willing to become your tenant; and let them that posted up the notices go to old Nick, or, if they annoy me, let them take care that I don't send them there. I am a *true blue*, sir—a *purple man**—have lots of fire-arms, and plenty of stout fellows in the parish ready and willing to back me; and, by the light of day! if they make or meddle with me or mine, we will hunt them in the face of the world, like so many mad dogs, out of the country: what are they but a pack of *ribles* †, that would cut our throats, if they dared?'

"'I have no objection,' said Simmons, 'that you should express a firm determination to defend your life and protect your property; but I utterly condemn the spirit with which you seem to be animated. Be temperate and sober, but be firm. I will afford you every assistance and protection in my power, both as a magistrate and a landlord; but if you speak so incautiously, the result may be serious, if not fatal, to yourself.'

"'Instead of that,' said Vengeance, 'the more a man appears to be afeard, the more danger he is in, as I know by what I have seen; but, at any rate, if they injure me, I wouldn't ask better sport than taking down the ribles—the bloody-minded villains! Isn't

* These terms denote certain stages of initiation in the Orange system.
† Rebels.

it a purty thing that a man daren't put one foot past the other only as *they* wish? By the light o' day, I'll pepper them!'

"Shortly after this, Vengeance, braving all their threats, removed to the farm, and set about its cultivation with skill and vigour. He had not been long there, however, when a notice was posted one night on his door, giving him ten days to clear off from this interdicted spot, threatening, in case of non-compliance, to make a bonfire of the house and offices, inmates included. The reply which Vengeance made to this was fearless and characteristic. He wrote another notice, which he posted on the chapel door, stating that he would not budge an inch—recommending, at the same time, such as intended paying him a nightly visit to be careful that they might not chance to go home with their heels foremost. This, indeed, was setting them completely at defiance, and would, no doubt, have been fatal to Vesey, were it not for a circumstance which I will now relate:—In a little dell, below Vesey's house, lived a poor woman, called Doran, a widow; she inhabited a small hut, and was principally supported by her two sons, who were servants, one to a neighbouring farmer, a Roman Catholic, and the other to Dr. Ableson, rector of the parish. He who had been with the rector lost his health shortly before Vengeance succeeded the Grogans as occupier of the land in question, and was obliged to come home to his mother. He was then confined to his bed, from which, indeed, he never rose.

"This boy had been his mother's principal support—for the other was unsettled, and paid her but little attention, being, like most of those in his situation, fond of drinking, dancing, and attending fairs. In short, he became a Ribbonman, and consequently was obliged to attend their nightly meetings. Now it so happened that for a considerable time after the threatening notice had been posted on Vengeance's door, he received no annoyance, although the period allowed for his departure had been long past, and the

purport of the paper uncomplied with. Whether this proceeded from an apprehension on the part of the Ribbonmen of receiving a warmer welcome than they might wish, or whether they deferred the execution of their threat until Vengeance might be off his guard, I cannot determine; but the fact is, that some months had elapsed and Vengeance remained hitherto unmolested.

"During this interval the distress of Widow Doran had become know to the inmates of his family, and his mother—for she lived with him—used to bring down each day some nourishing food to the sick boy. In these kind offices she was very punctual; and so great was the poverty of the poor widow, and so destitute the situation of her sick son, that, in fact, the burden of their support lay principally upon Vengeance's family.

"Vengeance was a small, thin man, with fair hair and fiery eyes; his voice was loud and shrill, his utterance rapid, and the general expression of his countenance irritable. His motions were so quick, that he rather seemed to run than walk. He was a civil, obliging neighbour, but performed his best actions with a bad grace; a firm, unflinching friend, but a bitter and implacable enemy. Upon the whole, he was generally esteemed and respected—though considered as an eccentric character, for such, indeed, he was. On hearing of Widow Doran's distress, he gave orders that a portion of each meal should be regularly sent down to her and her son; and from that period forward they were both supported principally from his table.

"In this way some months had passed, and still Vengeance was undisturbed in his farm. It often happened, however, that Doran's other son came to see his brother; and during these visits it was but natural that his mother and brother should allude to the kindness which they daily experienced from Vesey.

"One night, about twelve o'clock, a tap came to

Widow Doran's door, who happened to be attending the invalid, as he was then nearly in the last stage of his illnesss. When she opened it, the other son entered, in an evident hurry, having the appearance of a man who felt deep and serious anxiety.

"'Mother,' said he, 'I was very uneasy entirely about Mick, and just started over to see him, although they don't know at home that I'm out, so that I can't stay a crack; but I wish you would go to the door for two or three minutes, as I have something to say to *him*.'

"'Why, thin, Holy Mother!—Jack, a-hagur, is there anything the matther, for you look as if *you had seen something* *?'

"'Nothing worse than myself, mother,' he replied; 'nor there's nothing the matther at all—only I have a few words to say to Mick here, that's all.'

"The mother accordingly removed herself out of hearing.

"'Mick,' says the boy, 'this is a bad business—I wish to God I was clear and clean out of it.'

"'What is it?' said Mick, alarmed.

"'Murther, I'm afeard, if God doesn't turn it off of them, somehow.'

"'What do you mane, man, at all?' said the invalid, raising himself, in deep emotion, on his elbow, from his poor straw bed.

"'Vengeance,' said he—'Vengeance man—he's going to get it. I was out with the boys on Sunday evening, and *at last* it's agreed on to visit him to-morrow night. I'm sure and sartin he'll never escape, for there's more *in* for him than taking the farm, and daring them so often as he did—he shot two fingers off of a brother-in-law of Jem Reilly's one night that they war *on* for threshing him, and that's coming home to him along with the rest.'

"'In the name of God, Jack,' inquired Mick, 'what do they intend to do to him?'

* This phrase means: you look as if you had seen a ghost; it is a very common one.

"'Why,' replied Jack, 'it's agreed to put a coal in the thatch, in the first place; and although they were afeared to name what he's to get besides, I doubt they'll make a spatch-cock of *himself*. They won't meddle with any other of the family, though—but *he's down* for it.'

"'Are *you* to be one of them?' asked Mick.

"'I was the third man, named,' replied the other, 'bekase, they said, I knew the place.'

"'Jack,' said his emaciated brother, with much solemnity, raising himself up in the bed—'Jack, if you have act or part in that bloody business, God in his glory you'll never see. Fly the country—cut off a finger or toe—break your arm—or do something that may prevent you from being there. Oh, my God!' he exclaimed, whilst the tears fell fast down his pale cheeks—'to go to murder the man, and lave his little family widout a head or a father over them, and his wife a widow! To burn his place, widout rhime, or rason, or offince! Jack, if you go, I'll die cursing you. I'll appear to you—I'll let you rest neither night nor day, sleeping nor waking, in bed or out of bed. I'll haunt you, till you'll curse the very hour you war born.'

"'Whist, Micky,' said Jack, 'you're frightening me: I'll not go—will that satisfy you?'

"'Well, dhrop down on your two knees, there,' said Micky, 'and swear before the God that has his eye upon you this minute, that you'll have no hand in injuring him or his, while you live. If you don't do this, I'll not rest in my grave, and maybe I'll be a corpse before mornin'.'

"'Well, Micky,' said Jack, who, though wild and unthinking, was a lad whose heart and affections were good, 'it would be hard for me to refuse you that much, and you not likely to be long wid me—I will;' and he accordingly knelt down and swore solemnly, in words which his brother dictated to him, that he would not be concerned in the intended murder.

"'Now, give me your hand, Jack,' said the invalid;

'God bless you—and so he will. Jack, if I depart before I see you again, I'll die happy. That man has supported me and my mother, for near the last three months, bad as you all think him. Why Jack, we would be both dead of hunger long ago, only for his family; and, my God! to think of such a murdhering intention makes my blood run cowld'——

"'You had better give him a hint then,' said Jack, 'some way, or he'll be done for, as sure as you're stretched on that bed; but don't mintion names, if you wish to keep me from being murdhered for what I did. I must be off now, for I stole out of the barn*; and only that Atty Laghy's gone along wid the master to the——fair, to help him to sell the two coults, I couldn't get over at all.'

"'Well, go home, Jack, and God bless you, and so he will, for what you did this night.'

"Jack accordingly departed, after bidding his mother and brother farewell.

"When the old woman came in, she asked her son if there was anything wrong with his brother, but he replied that there was not.

"'Nothing at all,' said he—'but will you go up early in the morning, plase God, and tell Vesey Johnston that I want to see him; and—that—I have a great deal to say to him.'

"'To be sure I will, Micky; but, Lord guard us, what ails you, avourneen, you look so frightened?'

"'Nothing at all, at all, mother; but will you go where I say airly to-morrow, for me?'

"'It's the first thing I'll do, God willin',' replied the mother. And the next morning Vesey was down with the invalid very early, for the old woman kept her word, and paid him a timely visit.

"'Well, Micky, my boy,' said Vengeance, as he entered the hut, 'I hope you're no worse this morning.'

"'Not worse, Sir,' replied Mick; 'nor, indeed, am

* Labouring servants in Ireland usually sleep in barns.

I anything better either, but much the same way. Sure it's I that knows very well that my time here is but short.'

"'Well, Mick, my boy,' said Vengeance, 'I hope you're prepared for death—and that you expect forgiveness, like a Christian. Look up, my boy, to God at once, and pitch the priests and their craft to ould Nick, where they'll all go at the long-run.'

"'I b'lieve,' said Mick, with a faint smile, 'that you're not very fond of the priests, Mr. Johnston; but if you knew the power they possess as well as I do, you wouldn't spake of them so bad, anyhow.'

"'Me fond of them!' replied the other; 'why, man, they're a set of the most gluttonous, black-looking hypocrites, that ever walked on neat's leather; and ought to be hunted out of the country—hunted out of the country, by the light of day! every one of them; for they do nothing but egg up the people against the Protestants.'

"'God help you, Mr. Johnston,' replied the invalid, 'I pity you from my heart for the opinion you hould about them. I suppose if you were sthruck dead on the spot wid a blast from the fairies, that you think a priest could'nt cure you by one word's spaking?'

"'Cure me!' said Vengeance, with a laugh of disdain; 'by the light of day! if I caught one of them curing me, I'd give him the purtiest chase you ever saw in your life, across the hills.'

"'Don't you know,' said Mick, 'that priest Dannelly cured Bob Beaty of the falling sickness—until he broke the vow that was laid upon him, of not going into a church, and the minute he crossed the church door, didn't he dhrop down as bad as ever—and what could the minister do for him?'

"'And don't you know,' rejoined Vengeance, 'that that's all a parcel of the most lying stuff possible; lies—lies—all lies—and vagabondism? Why, Mick, you Papishes worship the priests; you think they can bring you to heaven at a word. By the light of day, they must have good sport laughing at you, when they

get among one another. Why don't they teach you and give you the Bible to read, the ribelly rascals? but they're afraid you'd know too much then.'

"'Well, Mr. Johnston,' said Mick, 'I b'lieve you'll never have a good opinion of them, at any rate.'

"'Ay, when the sky falls,' replied Vengeance; 'but you're now on your death-bed, and why don't you pitch them to ould Nick, and get a Bible? Get a Bible, man; there's a pair of them in my house, that's never used at all—except my mother's, and she's at it night and day. I'll send one of them down to you: turn yourself to God—to your Redeemer, that died on the mount of Jehoshaphat, or somewhere about Jerusalem, for your sins—and don't go out of the world from the hand of a rascally priest, with a band about your eyes, as if you were at blind-man's-buff, for by the light of day, you're as blind as a bat in a religious way.'

"'There's no use in sending me a Bible,' replied the invalid, 'for I can't read it: but, whatever you may think, I'm very willing to lave my salvation with my priest.'

"'Why, man,' observed Vengeance, 'I thought you were going to have sense at last, and that you sent for me to give you some spiritual consolation.'

"'No, Sir,' replied Mick; 'I have two or three words to spake to you.'

"'Come, come, Mick, now that we're on a spiritual subject, I'll hear nothing from you till I try whether it's possible to give you a true insight into religion. Stop, now, and let us lay our heads together, that we may make out something of a dacenter creed for you to believe in than the one you profess. Tell me the truth, do you believe in the priests?

"'How?' replied Mick; 'I believe that they're holy men—but I know they can't save me widout the Redeemer, and his blessed mother.'

"'By the light above us, you're shuffling, Mick—I say you *do* believe in them—now, don't tell me to the contrary—I say you're shuffling as fast as possible.'

"'I tould you truth, Sir,' replied Mick; 'and if you don't believe me, I can't help it.'

"'Don't trust in the priests, Mick; that's the main point to secure your salvation.'

"'Mick, who knew his prejudices against the priests, smiled faintly, and replied—

"'Why, Sir, I trust in them as bein' able to make inthercession wid God for me, that's all.'

"'They make intercession! By the stool I'm sitting on, a single word from one of them would ruin you. They, a set of ribles, to make interest for you in heaven! Didn't they rise the rebellion in Ireland? —answer me that.'

"'This is a subject, Sir, we would never agree on,' replied Mick.

"'Have you the Ten Commandments?' inquired Vesey.

"'I doubt my mimory's not clear enough to have them in my mind,' said the lad, feeling keenly the imputation of ignorance, which he apprehended from Vesey's blunt observations.

"'Vesey, however, had penetration enough to perceive his feelings, and, with more delicacy than could be expected from him, immediately moved the question.

"'No matter, Mick,' said he, 'if you would give up the priests, we would get over that point: as it is, I will give you a lift in the Commandments; and, as I said a while ago, if you take my advice, I'll work up a creed for you that you may depend upon. But now for the Commandments—let me see.

"'First: Thou shalt have no other gods but me. Don't you see, man, how that peppers the priests?

"'Second: Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath-day.

"'Third: Thou shalt not make to thyself—no, hang it no!—I'm out—that's the Second—very right. Third: Honour thy father and thy mother—you understand that, Mick? It means that you are bound to—to—just so—to honour your father and your mother, poor woman.'

"'My father—God be good to him!—is dead near fourteen years, sir,' replied Mick.

"'Well, in that case, Mick, you see all that's left for you is to honour your mother—although I'm not certain of that either; the Commandments make no allowance at all for death, and in that case why, living or dead, the surest way is to respect and obey them—that is, if the thing wern't impossible. I wish we had blind George M'Girr here, Mick: although he's as great a rogue as ever escaped hemp, yet he'd beat the ould boy himself at a knotty point.'

"'His breath would be bad about a dying man,' observed Mick.

"'Ay, or a living one,' said Vesey; 'however, let us get on—we were at the Third. Fourth: Thou shalt do no murder.'

"At the word murder, Mick started, and gave a groan, whilst his eyes and features assumed a gaunt and hollow expression, resembling that of a man struck with an immediate sense of horror and affright.

"'Oh! for heaven's sake, sir, stop there,' said Doran; 'that brings to my mind the business I had with you, Mr. Johnston.'

"'What is it about?' inquired Vengeance, in his usual eager manner.

"'Do you mind,' said Mick, 'that a paper was stuck one night upon your door, threatening you, if you wouldn't lave that farm you're in?'

"'I do, the blood-thirsty villains! but they knew a trick worth two of coming near me.'

"'Well," said Mick, 'a strange man, that I never seen before, came into me last night, and tould me, if I'd see you, to say that you would get a visit from the boys this night, and to take care of yourself.'

"'Give me the hand, Mick,' said Vengeance—'give me the hand; in spite of the priests, by the light of day you're an honest fellow. This night, you say, they're to come! And what are the bloody wretches to do, Mick? But I needn't ask that, for I suppose it's to murder myself, and to burn my place.'

"'I'm afeard, sir, you're not far from the truth,' replied Mick; 'but, Mr. Johnston, for God's sake, don't mintion my name; for, if you do, I'll get myself what they war laying out for you—be burned in my bed, maybe.'

"'Never fear, Mick,' replied Vengeance; 'your name will never cross my lips.'

"'It's a great thing,' said Mick, 'that would make me turn informer; but sure, only for your kindness and the goodness of your family, the Lord spare you to one another! mighn't I be dead long ago? I couldn't have one minute's peace if you or yours came to any harm when I could prevint it.'

"'Say no more, Mick,' said Vengeance, taking his hand again; 'I know that, leave the rest to me; but how do you find yourself, my poor fellow? you look weaker than you did, a good deal.'

"'Indeed I'm going very fast, Sir,' replied Mick; 'I know it 'll soon be over with me.'

"'Hut, no, man,' said Vengeance, drawing his hand rapidly across his eyes, and clearing his voice, 'not at all—don't say so: would a little broth serve you? or a bit of fresh meat?—or would you have a fancy for anything that I could make out for you? I'll get you wine, if you think it would do you good.'

"'God reward you,' said Mick feebly—'God reward you, and open your eyes to the truth. Is my mother likely to come in, do you think?'

"'She must be here in a few minutes,' the other replied; 'she was waiting till they'd churn, that she might bring you down a little fresh milk and butter.'

"'I wish she was wid me,' said the poor lad, 'for I'm lonely wantin' her—her voice and the very touch of her hands goes to my heart. Mother, come to me, and let me lay my head upon your breast, agra machree, for I think it will be for the last time: we lived lonely, avourneen, wid none but ourselves—sometimes in happiness, when the nabours 'ud be kind to us—and sometimes in sorrow, when there 'ud be none to

help us. It's over now, mother, and I'm lavin' you for ever!'

"Vengeance wiped his eyes—'Rouse yourself, Mick,' said he, 'rouse yourself.'

"'Who is that sitting along with you on the stool?' said Mick.

"'No one,' replied his neighbour; 'but what's the matter with you, Mick?—your face is changed.'

"Mick, however, made no reply; but after a few slight struggles, in which he attempted to call upon his mother's name, he breathed his last. When Vengeance saw that he was dead—looked upon the cold miserable hut in which this grateful and affectionate young man was stretched—and then reflected on the important service he had just rendered him, he could not suppress his tears.

"After sending down some of the females to assist his poor mother in laying him out, Vengeance went among his friends and acquaintances, informing them of the intelligence he had received, without mentioning the source from which he had it. After dark that evening, they all flocked, as privately as possible to his house, to the number of thirty or forty, well provided with arms and ammunition. Some of them stationed themselves in the outhouses, some behind the garden-hedge, and others in the dwelling-house."

When my brother had got thus far in his narrative, a tap came to the parlour-door, and immediately a stout-looking man, having the appearance of a labourer, entered the room.

"Well, Lachlin," said my brother, "what's the matter?"

"Why, Sir," said Lachlin, scratching his head, "I had a bit of a favour to ax, if it would be plasin' to you to grant it to me."

"What is that?" said my brother.

"Do you know, Sir," said he, "I havn't been at a wake—let us see—this two or three years, anyhow; and, if you'd have no objection, why, I'd slip up awhile

to Denis Kelly's ; he's a distant relation of my own, Sir ; and blood's thicker than wather, you know."

"I'm just glad you came in, Lachlin," said my brother ; "I didn't think of you : take a chair here, and never heed the wake to-night, but sit down and tell us of the attack on Vesey Vengeance, long ago. I'll get you a tumbler of punch ; and, instead of going to the wake, I will allow you to go to the funeral to-morrow."

"Ah, Sir," said Lachlin, "you know whenever the punch is consarned, I'm aisily persuaded ; but not making little of your tumbler, Sir," said the shrewd fellow, "I would get two or three of them if I went to the wake."

"Well, sit down," said my brother, handing him one, "and we won't permit you to get thirsty while you're talking, at all events."

"In throth, you haven't your heart in the likes of it," said Lachlin. "Gintlemen, your healths—*your* health, Sir, and we're happy to see you wanst more. Why, thin, I remember you, Sir, when you were a gorsoon, passing to school wid your satchell on your back ; but, I'll be bound you're by no means as soople now as you were thin. Why, Sir," turning to my brother, "he could fly or kick football wid the rabbits.—Well, this is raal stuff !"

"Now, Lachlin," said my brother, "give us an account of the attack you made on Vesey Vengeance's house, at the Long Ridge, when all his party were chased out of the town."

"Why, thin, Sir, I ought to be ashamed to mintion it ; but you see, gintlemen, there was no getting over being connected wid them ; but I hope your brother's *safe*, Sir !"

"Oh, perfectly safe, Lachlin ; you may rest assured he'll never mention it."

"Well, Sir, said Lachlin, addressing himself to me, "Vesey Vengeance was—."

"Lachlin," said my brother, "he knows all about Vesey ; just give an account of the attack."

"The attack, Sir! no, but the chivey we got over the mountains. Why, Sir, we met in an ould empty house, you see, that belonged to the Farrells of Ballyboulteen, that went over to America that spring. There war none wid us, you may be sure, but them that war *up*;* and in all we might be about sixty or seventy. The Grogans, one way or another, got it up first among them, bekase they expected that Mr. Simmons would take them back when he'd find that no one else dare venther upon their land. There war at that time two fellows down from the county Longford in their neighbourhood, of the name of Collier—although that wasn't their right name—they were here upon their keeping, for the murder of a proctor in their own part of the country. One of them was a tall, powerful fellow, with sandy hair, and red brows; the other was a slender chap, that must have been drawn into it by his brother—for he was very mild and innocent, and always persuaded us agin evil. The Grogans brought lashings of whiskey, and made them that war to go foremost amost drunk—these war the two Colliers, some of the strangers from behind the mountains, and a son of Widdy Doran's that knew every inch about the place, for he was bred and born jist below the house a bit. He wasn't wid us, however, in regard of his brother being *under board* that night; but, instid of him, Tim Grogan went to show the way up the little glin to the house, though, for that matther, the most of us knew it as well as he did; but we didn't like to be the first to put a hand to it, if we could help it.

"At any rate, we sot in Farrell's empty house, drinking whiskey, till they war all gathered, when about two dozen of them got the damp soot from the chimley, and rubbed it over their faces, making them so black, that their own relations couldn't know them. We then went across the country in little lots, of about six or ten, or a score, and we war glad that the

* That is, had been made members of a secret society.

wake was in Widdy Doran's, seeing that, if any one would meet us, we war going to it, you know, and the blackening of the faces would pass for a frolic; but there was no great danger of being met, for it was now long beyant midnight.

"Well, gintlemen, it puts me into a tremble, even at this time, to think of how little we cared about what we were bent upon. Them that had to manage the business war more than half drunk; and, hard fortune to me! but you would think it was to a wedding they went—some of them singing songs against the law—some of them quite merry, and laughing as if they had found a mare's nest. The big fellow, Collier, had a dark lanthern wid a half-burned turf in it to light the bonfire, as they said; others had guns and pistols—some of them charged, and some of them not; some had bagnets, and ould rusty swords, pitchforks, and so on. Myself had nothing in my hand but the flail I was thrashing wid that day; and to tell the thruth, the divil a step I would have gone with them, only for fraid of my health: for, as I said awhile agone, if any discovery was made afterwards, them that promised to go, and turned tail, would be marked as the informers. Neither was I so blind, but I could see that there war plenty there that would stay away if they durst.

"Well, we went on till we came to a little dark corner below the house, where we met and held a council of war upon what we should do. Collier and the other strangers from behind the mountains war to go first, and the rest war to stand round the house at a distance—he carried the lanthern, a bagnet, and a horse pistol; and half-a-dozen more war to bring over bottles of straw from Vengeance's own haggard, to hould up to the thatch. It's all past and gone now—but three of the Reillys were desperate against Vesey that night, particularly one of them that he had shot about a year and a half before—that is, peppered two of the right-hand fingers off of him, one night in a scuffle, as Vesey came home from an Orange-lodge.

Well, all went on purty fair; we had got as far as the out-houses, where we stopped, to see if we could hear any noise; but all was quiet as you plase.

"'Now, Vengeance,' says Reilly, swearing a terrible oath out of him—'you murdering Orange villain, you're going to get your pay,' says he.

"'Ay,' says Grogan, 'what he often threatened to others he'll soon meet himself, plase God!—come, boys,' says he, 'bring the straw and light it, and just lay it up, my darlings, nicely to the thatch here, and ye'll see what a glorious bonfire we'll have of the black orange villain's blankets in less than no time.'

"Some of us could hardly stand this: 'Stop, boys,' cried one of Dan Slevin's sons—'stop, Vengeance is bad enough, but his wife and children never offended us—we'll not burn the place.'

"'No,' said others, speaking out when they heard any body at all having courage do do so—'it's too bad, boys, to burn the place; for if we do,' says they, 'some of the innocent may be burned before they get from the house, or even before they waken out of their sleep.'

"'Knock at the door first,' says Slevin, 'and bring Vengeance out; let us cut the ears of his head and lave him.'

"'Damn him!' says another, 'let us not take the vagabone's life; it's enough to take the ears from him, and to give him a *prod* or two of a bagnet on the ribs; but don't kill him.'

"'Well, well,' says Reilly, 'let us knock at the door, and get himself and the family out,' says he, 'and then we'll see what can be done wid him.'

"'Tattheration to me,' says the big Longford fellow, 'if he had served me Reilly, as he did you, but I'd roast him in the flames of his own house,' says he.

"'I'd have *you* to know,' says Slevin, 'that you have no command here, Collier. I'm captain at the present time,' says he; 'and more nor what I wish shall not be done. Go over,' says he to the black faces, 'and rap him up.'

Accordingly they began to knock at the door, commanding Vengeance to get up and come out to them.

"'Come, Vengeance,' says Collier, 'put on you, my good fellow, and come out till two or three of your neighbours, that wish you well, gets a sight of your purty face you babe of grace!'

"'Who are you that wants me at all?' says Vengeance from within.

"'Come out first,' says Collier; 'a few friends that has a crow to pluck with you: walk out, avourneen; or if you'd rather be roasted alive, why you may stay where you are,' says he.

"'Gentlemen,' says Vengeance, 'I have never to my knowledge, offended any of you; and I hope you won't be so cruel as to take an industrious, hard-working man from his family, in the clouds of the night, to do him an injury. Go home, gentlemen, in the name of God, and let me and mine alone. You're all mighty dacent gentlemen, you know, and I'm determined never to make or meddle with any of you. Sure, I know right well its purtecting me you would be, dacent gentlemen. But I don't think there's any of my neighbours there, or they wouldn't stand by and see me injured.'

"'Thrue for you, avick,' says they, giving, at the same time, a terrible patterrara agin the door, with two or three big stones.

"'Stop, stop!' says Vengeance, 'don't break the door, and I'll open it. I know you're merciful, dacent gentlemen—I know you're merciful.'

"So the thief came and unbarred it quietly, and the next minute about a dozen of them that war within the house let slap at us. As God would have had it, the crowd didn't happen to be forenent the door, or numbers of them would have been shot, and the night was dark, too, which was in our favour. The first volley was scarcely over, when there was another slap from the out-houses; and after that another from the gardens; and after that, to be sure, we took to our scrapers. Several of them were very badly wounded;

but as for Collier, he was shot dead, and Grogan was taken prisoner, with five more, on the spot. There never was such a chase as we got; and only that they thought there was more of us in it, they might have tuck most of us prisoners.

"'Fly, boys!' says Grogan, as soon as they fired out of the house—'we've been sould,' says he, 'but I'll die game, any how'—and so he did, poor fellow; for although he and the other four war transported, one of them never sould the pass or stagged. Not but that they might have done it, for all that, only that there was a whisper sent to them, that if they *did*, a single soul belonging to one of them wouldn't be left living. The Grogans were cousins of Denis Kelly's, that's now laid out there above.

"From the time this tuck place till after the 'sizes, there wasn't a stir among them on any side; but when that war over, the boys began to prepare. Denis, heavens be his bed, was there in his glory. This was in the spring 'sizes, and the May fair soon followed. Ah! that was the bloody sight, I'm tould—for I wasn't at it—atween the Orangemen and them. The Ribbonmen war bate though, but not till after there was a desperate fight on both sides. I was tould that Denis Kelly that day knocked down five-and-twenty men in about three-quarter's of an hour; and only that long John Grimes hot him a *polthoge* on the sconce with the butt-end of the gun, is was thought the Orangemen would be beat. That blow broke his skull, and was the manes of his death. He was carried home senseless."

"Well, Lachlin," said my brother, "if you didn't see it, I did. I happened to be looking out of John Carson's upper window—for it wasn't altogether safe to contemplate it within reach of the missiles. It was certainly a dreadful and a barbarous sight. You have often observed the calm, gloomy silence that precedes a thunder-storm; and had you been there that day, you might have witnessed its illustration in a scene much more awful. The thick living mass of people

extended from the corner-house, nearly a quarter of a mile, at this end of the town, up to the parsonage on the other side. During the early part of the day, every kind of business was carried on in a hurry and impatience, which denoted the little chance they knew there would be for transacting it in the evening.

"Up to the hour of four o'clock the fair was unusually quiet, and, on the whole, presented nothing in any way remarkable; but after that hour you might observe the busy stir and hum of the mass settling down into a deep, brooding portentous silence, that was absolutely fearful. The females, with dismay and terror pictured in their faces, hurried home; and in various instances you might see mothers, and wives, and sisters, clinging about the sons, husbands, and brothers, attempting to drag them by main force from the danger which they knew impended over them. In this they seldom succeeded; for the person so urged was usually compelled to tear himself from them by superior strength.

"The pedlars and basket-woman, and such as had tables and standings erected in the streets, commenced removing them with all possible haste. The shopkeepers, and other inhabitants of the town, put up their shutters, in order to secure their windows from being shattered. Strangers, who were compelled to stop in the town that night, took shelter in the inns and other houses of entertainment where they lodged: so that about five o'clock the street was completely clear, and free for action.

"Hitherto there was not a stroke—the scene became even more silent and gloomy, although the moral darkness of their ill-suppressed passions was strongly contrasted with the splendour of the sun, that poured down a tide of golden light upon the multitude. This contrast between the natural brightness of the evening, and the internal gloom of their hearts, as the beams of the sun rested upon the ever-moving crowd, would, to any man who knew the impetuosity with which the spirit of religious hatred was soon to rage

among them, produce novel and singular sensations. For, after all, Toby, there is a mysterious connection between natural and moral things, which often invests both nature and sentiment with a feeling that certainly would not come home to our hearts, if such a connexion did not exist. A rose-tree beside a grave will lead us from sentiment to reflection; and any other association, where a painful or melancholy thought is clothed with a garb of joy or pleasure, will strike us more deeply in proportion as the contrast is strong. On seeing the sun or moon struggling through the darkness of surrounding clouds, I confess, although you may smile, that I feel for the moment a diminution of enjoyment—something taken, as it were, from the sum of my happiness.

"Ere the quarrel commenced, you might see a dark and hateful glare scowling from the countenance of the two parties, as they viewed and approached each other in the street—the eye was set in deadly animosity, and the face marked with an ireful paleness, occasioned at once by revenge and apprehension. Groups were silently hurrying with an eager and energetic step to their places of rendezvous, grasping their weapons more closely, or grinding their teeth in the impatience of their fury. The veterans on each side were surrounded by their respective followers, anxious to act under their direction; and the very boys seemed to be animated with a martial spirit, much more eager than that of those who had greater experience in party quarrels.

"Jem Finigan's public-house was the head-quarters and rallying-point of the Ribbonmen; the Orangemen assembled in that of Joe Sherlock, the master of an Orange lodge. About six o'clock, the crowd in the street began gradually to fall off to the opposite ends of the town—the Roman Catholics towards the north, and the Protestants towards the south. Carson's window, from which I was observing their motions, was exactly half way between them, so that I had a distinct view of both. At this moment I noticed

Denis Kelly coming forward from the closely condensed mass formed by the Ribbonmen: he advanced with his cravat off, to the middle of the vacant space between the parties, holding a fine oak cudgel in his hand. He then stopped, and addressing the Orangemen, said,

"'Where's Vengeance and his crew now? Is there any single Orange villain among you that dare come down and meet me here, like a man? Is John Grimes there? for if he is, before we begin to take you *out of a face*, to hunt you altogether out of the town, ye Orange villains, I would be glad that he'd step down to Denis Kelly here for two or three minutes; I'll not keep him longer.'

"There was now a stir and murmur among the Orangemen, as if a rush was about to take place towards Denis; but Grimes, whom I saw endeavouring to curb them in, left the crowd, and advanced towards him.

"At this moment an instinctive movement among both masses took place; so that, when Grimes had come within a few yards of Kelly, both parties were within two or three perches of them. Kelly was standing, apparently off his guard, with one hand thrust carelessly into the breast of his waistcoat, and the cudgel in the other; but his eye was fixed calmly upon Grimes as he approached. They were both powerful, fine men—brawny, vigorous, and active: Grimes had somewhat the advantage of the other in height; he also fought with his left hand, from which circumstance he was nicknamed *Kitthogue*. He was a man of a dark, stern-looking countenance; and the tones of his voice were deep, sullen, and of appalling strength.

"As they approached each other, the windows on each side of the street were crowded; but there was not a breath to be heard in any direction, nor from either party. As for myself, my heart palpitated with anxiety. What *they* might have felt I do not know: but they must have experienced considerable

apprehension; for as they were both the champions of their respective parties, and had never before met in single encounter, their characters depended on the issue of the contest.

"'Well, Grimes,' said Denis, 'sure I've often wished for this same meetin', man, betune myself and you; I have what you are goin' to get *in* for you this long time; but you'll get it now, avick, plase God——'

"'It wasn't to scould I came, you popish, ribly rascal,' replied Grimes, 'but to give you what you're long——'

"Ere the word had been out of his mouth, however, Kelly sprung over to him; and making a feint, as if he intended to lay the stick on his ribs, he swung it past without touching him, and, bringing it round his own head like lightning, made it tell with a powerful back-stroke right on Grimes' temple, and in an instant his own face was sprinkled with the blood which sprung from the wound. Grimes staggered forward towards his antagonist, seeing which, Kelly sprung back, and was again meeting him with full force, when Grimes, turning a little, clutched Kelly's stick in his right hand, and being left-handed himself, ere the other could wrench the cudgel from him, he gave him a terrible blow upon the back part of the head, which laid Kelly in the dust.

"There was then a deafening shout from the Orange party; and Grimes stood until Kelly should be in the act of rising, ready then to give him another blow. The coolness and generalship of Kelly, however, were here very remarkable; for, when he was just getting to his feet, 'Look at your party coming down upon me!' he exclaimed to Grimes, who turned round to order them back, and, in the interim, Kelly was upon his legs.

"I was surprised at the coolness of both men; for Grimes was by no means inflated at the boisterous triumph of his party—nor did Denis get into a blind rage on being knocked down. They approached again, their eyes kindled into savage fury, tamed

down into the wariness of experienced combatants; for a while they stood eyeing each other, as if calculating upon the contingent advantages of attack or defence. This was a moment of great interest; for, as their huge and powerful frames stood out in opposition, strung and dilated by the impulse of passion and the energy of contest, no judgment, however experienced, could venture to anticipate the result of the battle, or name the person likely to be victorious. Indeed it was surprising how the natural sagacity of these men threw their attitudes and movements into scientific form and symmetry. Kelly raised his cudgel, and placed it transversely in the air, between himself and his opponent; Grimes instantly placed his against it—both weapons thus forming a St. Andrew's cross—whilst the men themselves stood foot to foot, calm and collected. Nothing could be finer than their proportions, nor superior to their respective attitudes; their broad chests were in a line; their thick, well-set necks, laid a little back, as were their bodies, without, however, losing their balance; and their fierce but calm features, grimly but placidly scowling at each other, like men who were prepared for the onset.

"At length, Kelly made an attempt to repeat his former feint, with variations; for, whereas he had sent the first blow to Grimes' right temple, he took measures now to reach the left; his action was rapid, but equally quick was the eye of his antagonist, whose cudgel was up in ready guard to meet the blow. It met it; and with such surprising power was it sent and opposed, that both cudgels, on meeting, bent across each other into curves. An involuntary huzza followed this from their respective parties—not so much on account of the skill displayed by the combatants, as in admiration of their cudgels, and of the judgment with which they must have been selected. In fact, it was the staves, rather than the men, that were praised; and certainly the former did their duty. In a moment, their shillelaghs were across each other

once more, and the men resumed their former attitudes; their savage determination, their kindled eyes, the blood which disfigured the face of Grimes, and begrimed also the countenance of his antagonist into a deeper expression of ferocity, occasioned many a cowardly heart to shrink from the sight. There they stood, gory and stern, ready for the next onset; it was first made by Grimes, who tried to practise on Kelly the feint which Kelly had before practised on him. Denis, after his usual manner, caught the blow in his open hand, and clutched the staff, with an intention of holding it until he might visit Grimes, now apparently unguarded, with a levelling blow; but Grimes' effort to wrest the cudgel from his grasp, drew all Kelly's strength to that quarter, and prevented him from availing himself of the other's defenceless attitude. A trial of muscular power ensued, and their enormous bodily strength was exhibited in the stiff tug for victory. Kelly's address prevailed; for while Grimes pulled against him with all his collected vigour, the former suddenly let go his hold, and the latter, having lost his balance, staggered back: lightning could not be more quick than the action of Kelly, as, with tremendous force, his cudgel rung on the unprotected head of Grimes, who fell, or rather was shot to the ground, as if some superior power had dashed him against it; and there he lay for a short time, quivering under the blow he had received.

"A peal of triumph now arose from Kelly's party; but Kelly himself, placing his arms a-kimbo, stood calmly over his enemy, awaiting his return to the conflict. For nearly five minutes he stood in this attitude, during which time Grimes did not stir; at length Kelly stooped a little, and peering closely into his face, exclaimed—

"'Why, thin, is it acting you are?—anyhow, I wouldn't put it past you, you cunning vagabone; 'tis lying to take breath he is—get up, man, I'd scorn to touch you till you're on your legs; not all as one, for sure its yourself would show me no such forbearance.

Up with you, man alive, I've none of your thrachery in me. I'll not *rise* my cudgel till you're on your guard.'

"There was an expression of disdain, mingled with a glow of honest, manly generosity on his countenance, as he spoke, which made him at once the favourite with such spectators as were not connected with either of the parties. Grimes arose, and it was evident that Kelly's generosity deepened his resentment more than the blow which had sent him so rapidly to the ground; however, he was still cool, but his brows knit, his eye flashed with double fierceness, and his complexion settled into a dark blue shade, which gave to his whole visage an expression fearfully ferocious. Kelly hailed this as the first appearance of passion; *his* brow expanded as the other approached, and a dash of confidence, if not of triumph, softened in some degree the sternness of his features.

"With caution they encountered again, each collected for a spring, their eyes gleaming at each other like those of tigers. Grimes made a motion as if he would have struck Kelly with his fist; and, as the latter threw up his guard against the blow, he received a stroke from Grimes's cudgel in the under part of the right arm. This had been directed at his elbow with an intention of rendering the arm powerless; it fell short, however, yet was sufficient to relax the grasp which Kelly had of his weapon. Had Kelly been a novice, this stratagem alone would have soon vanquished him; his address, however, was fully equal to that of his antagonist. The staff dropped instantly from his grasp, but a stout thong of black polished leather, with a shining tassel at the end of it, had bound it securely to his massive wrist; the cudgel, therefore, only dangled from his arm, and did not, as the other expected, fall to the ground, or put Denis to the necessity of stooping for it—Grimes's object being to have struck him in that attitude.

"A flash of indignation now shot from Kelly's eye, and with the speed of lightning he sprung withir

Grimes's weapon, determined to wrest it from him. The grapple that ensued was gigantic. In a moment Grimes's staff was parallel with the horizon between them, clutched in the powerful grasp of both. They stood exactly opposite, and rather close to each other; their arms sometimes stretched out stiff and at full length, again contracted, until their faces, glowing and distorted by the energy of the contest, were drawn almost together. Sometimes the prevailing strength of one would raise the staff slowly, and with gradually developed power, up in a perpendicular position: again, the reaction of opposing strength would strain it back, and sway the weighty frame of the antagonist, crouched and set into desperate resistance, along with it; whilst the hard pebbles under their feet were crumbled into powder, and the very street itself furrowed into gravel by the shock of their opposing strength. Indeed, so well matched a pair never met in contest; their strength, their wind, their activity, and their natural science appeared to be perfectly equal.

"At length, by a tremendous effort, Kelly got the staff twisted nearly out of Grimes's hand, and a short shout, half encouraging, half indignant, came from Grimes's party. This added shame to his other passions, and threw an impulse of almost superhuman strength into him: he recovered his advantage, but nothing more; they twisted—they heaved their great frames against each other—they struggled—their action became rapid—they swayed each other this way and that—their eyes like fire—their teeth locked, and their nostrils dilated. Sometimes they twined about each other like serpents, and twirled round with such rapidity, that it was impossible to distinguish them—sometimes, when a pull of more than ordinary power took place, they seemed to cling together almost without motion, bending down until their heads nearly touched the ground, their cracking joints seeming to stretch by the effort, and the muscles of their limbs standing out from the flesh, strung into amazing tension.

"In this attitude were they, when Denis, with the eye of a hawk, spied a disadvantage in Grimes's position; he wheeled round, placed his broad shoulder against the shaggy breast of the other, and giving him what is called an 'inside crook,' strained him, despite of every effort, until he got him off his shoulder, and off the point of resistance. There was a cry of alarm from the windows, particularly from the females, as Grimes's huge body was swung over Kelly's shoulder, until it came down in a crash upon the hard gravel of the street, while Denis stood in triumph, with his enemy's staff in his hand. A loud huzza followed this from all present except the Orangemen, who stood bristling with fury and shame for the temporary defeat of their champion.

"Denis again had his enemy at his mercy; but he scorned to use his advantage ungenerously; he went over, and placing the staff in his hands—for the other had got to his legs—retrograded to his place, and desired Grimes to defend himself.

"After considerable manœuvring on both sides, Denis, who appeared to be the more active of the two, got an open on his antagonist, and by a powerful blow upon Grimes's ear, sent him to the ground with amazing force. I never saw such a blow given by mortal; the end of the cudgel came exactly upon the ear, and as Grimes went down, the blood spirted out of his mouth and nostrils; he then kicked convulsively several times as he lay upon the ground, and that moment I really thought he would never have breathed more.

"The shout was again raised by the Ribbonmen, who threw up their hats, and bounded from the ground with the most vehement exultation. Both parties then waited to give Grimes time to rise and renew the battle; but he appeared perfectly contented to remain where he was: for there appeared no signs of life or motion in him.

"'Have you got your *gruel*, boy?' said Kelly, going over to where he lay;—'Well, you met Denis Kelly,

at last, didn't you? and there you lie; but plase God, the most of your sort will soon lie in the same state. Come, boys,' said Kelly, addressing his own party, 'now for bloody Vengeance and his crew, that thransported the Grogans and the Caffries, and murdered Collier. Now, boys, have at the murderers, and let us have satisfaction for all!'

"A mutual rush instantly took place; but, ere the Orangemen came down to where Grimes lay, Kelly had taken his staff, and handed it to one of his own party. It is impossible to describe the scene that ensued. The noise of the blows, the shouting, the yelling, the groans, the scalped heads, and gory visages, gave both to the eye and ear an impression that could not easily be forgotten. The battle was obstinately maintained on both sides for nearly an hour, and with a skill of manœuvring, attack, and retreat, that was astonishing.

"Both parties arranged themselves against each other, forming something like two lines of battle, and these extended along the town, nearly from one end to the other. It was curious to remark the difference in the persons and appearances of the combatants. In the Orange line, the men were taller and of more powerful frames; but the Ribbonmen were more hardy, active and courageous. Man to man, notwithstanding their superior bodily strength, the Orangemen could never fight the others; the former depend too much upon their fire and side-arms, but they are by no means so well trained to the use of the cudgel as their enemies. In the district where the scene of this fight is laid, the Catholics generally inhabit the mountainous part of the country, to which, when the civil feuds of worse times prevailed, they had been driven at the point of the bayonet; the Protestants and Presbyterians, on the other hand, who came in upon their possessions, occupy the richer and more fertile tracts of the land; being more wealthy, they live with less labour, and on better food. The characteristic features produced by these causes are such

as might be expected—the Catholic being, like his soil, hardy, thin, and capable of bearing all weathers; and the Protestants, larger, softer, and more inactive.

"Their advance to their first onset was far different from a faction fight. Their existed a silence here, that powerfully evinced the inextinguishable animosity with which they encountered. For some time they fought in two compact bodies, that remained unbroken so long as the chances of victory were doubtful. Men went down, and were up, and went down in all directions, with uncommon rapidity; and as the weighty phalanx of Orangemen stood out against the nimble line of their mountain adversaries, the intrepid spirit of the latter, and their surprising skill and activity soon gave symptoms of a gradual superiority in the conflict. In the course of about half an hour, the Orange party began to give way in the northern end of the town; and, as their opponents pressed them warmly and with unsparing hand, the heavy mass formed by their numbers began to break, and this decomposition ran up their line until in a short time they were thrown into utter confusion. They now fought in detached parties; but these subordinate conflicts, though shorter in duration than the shock of the general battle, were much more inhuman and destructive; for whenever any particular gang succeeded in putting their adversaries to flight, they usually ran to the assistance of their friends in the nearest fight—by which means they often fought three to one. In these instances the persons inferior in number suffered such barbarities as it would be painful to detail.

There lived a short distance out of the town a man nicknamed Jemsy Boccagh, on account of his lameness—he was also sometimes called 'Hop-an'-go-constant,' who fell the first victim to party spirit. He had got arms on seeing his friends likely to be defeated, and had the hardihood to follow, with charged bayonet, a few Ribbonmen, whom he attempted to intercept, as they fled from a large number of their

enemies, who had got them separated from their comrades. Boccagh ran across a field, in order to get before them in the road, and was in the act of climbing a ditch, when one of them, who carried a spade-shaft, struck him a blow on the head, which put an end to his existence.*

"This circumstance imparted, of course, fiercer hatred to both parties—triumph inspiring the one, a thirst for vengeance nerving the other. Kelly inflicted tremendous punishment in every direction; for scarcely a blow fell from him which did not bring a man to the ground. It absolutely resembled a military engagement, for the number of combatants amounted at least to four thousand men. In many places the street was covered with small pools and clots of blood, which flowed from those who lay insensible—while others were borne away bleeding, groaning, or staggering, having been battered into a total unconsciousness of the scene about them.

"At length the Orangemen gave way, and their enemies, yelling with madness and revenge, began to beat them with unrestrained fury. The former, finding that they could not resist the impetuous tide which burst upon them, fled back past the church, and stopped not until they had reached an elevation, on which lay two or three heaps of stones, that had been collected for the purpose of paving the streets. Here they made a stand, and commenced a vigorous discharge of them against their pursuers. This checked the latter; and the others, seeing them hesitate and likely to retreat from the missiles, pelted them with such effect, that the tables became turned, and the Ribbonmen made a speedy flight back into the town.

"In the meantime several Orangemen had gone

* Fact. The person who killed him escaped to America where he got himself naturalised, and when the British Government claimed him, he pleaded his privilege of being an American citizen, and he was consequently not given up. Boccagh was a very violent Orangeman, and a very offensive one.

into Sherlock's, where a considerable number of arms had been deposited, with an intention of resorting to them in case of a defeat at the cudgels. These now came out, and met the Ribbonmen on their flight from those who were pelting them with stones. A dreadful scene ensued. The Ribbonmen, who had the advantage in numbers, finding themselves intercepted before by those who had arms, and pursued behind by those who had recourse to the stones, fought with uncommon bravery and desperation. Kelly, who was furious, but still collected and decisive, shouted out in Irish, lest the opposite party might understand him, 'Let every *two* men seize upon *one* of those who have the arms.'

"This was attempted, and effected with partial success; and I have no doubt but the Orangemen would have been ultimately beaten and deprived of their weapons, were it not that many of them, who had got their pistols out of Sherlock's, discharged them among their enemies, and wounded several. The Catholics could not stand this; but, wishing to retaliate as effectually as possible, lifted stones wherever they could find them, and kept up the fight at a distance, as they retreated. On both sides, wherever a solitary foe was caught straggling from the rest, he was instantly punished with a most cruel and bloodthirsty spirit.

"It was just about this time that I saw Kelly engaged with two men, whom he kept at bay with great ease—retrograding, however, as he fought, towards his own party. Grimes, who had for some time before this recovered and joined the fight once more, was returning, after having pursued several of the Ribbonmen past the market-house, where he spied Kelly thus engaged. With a Volunteer gun in his hand, and furious with the degradation of his former defeat, he ran over and struck him with the butt-end of it upon the temple—and Denis fell. When the stroke was given, an involuntary cry of 'Murder,—foul, foul!' burst from those who looked on from the

windows; and long John Steele, Grimes's father-in-law, in indignation, raised his cudgel to knock him down for this treacherous and malignant blow:—but a person out of Neal Cassidy's back-yard hurled a round stone, about six pounds in weight, at Grimes's head, that felled him to the earth, leaving him as insensible, and nearly in as dangerous a state as Kelly—for his jaw was broken.

"By this time the Catholics had retreated out of the town, and Denis might probably have received more punishment, had those who were returning from the pursuit recognised him; but James Wilson, seeing the dangerous situation in which he lay, came out, and, with the assistance of his servant-man, brought him into his own house. When the Orangemen had driven their adversaries off the field, they commenced the most hideous yellings through the streets—got music, and played party tunes—offered any money for the face of a Papist; and any of that religion who were so unfortuuate as to make their appearance, were beaten in the most relentless manner. It was precisely the same thing on the part of the Ribbonmen; if a Protestant, but above all, an Orangeman, came in their way, he was sure to be treated with barbarity; for the retaliation on either side was dreadfully unjust—the innocent suffering as well as the guilty. Leaving the window, I found Kelly in a bad state below stairs.

"'What's to be done?' said I to Wilson.

"'I know not,' replied he, 'except I put him between us on my jaunting car, and drive him home.'

"This appeared decidedly the best plan we could adopt; so, after putting to the horse, we placed him on the car, sitting one on each side of him, and, in this manner, left him at his own house."

"'Did you run no risk,' said I, 'in going among Kelly's friends, whilst they were under the influence of party feeling and exasperated passion?'

"'No,' said he; 'we had rendered many of them

acts of kindness, and had never exhibited any spirit but a *friendly* one towards them; and such individuals, but only such, *might walk through a crowd of enraged Catholics or Protestants quite unmolested.*'

"The next morning Kelly's landlord, Sir W. R——, and two magistrates, were at his house, but he lay like a log, wiihout sense or motion. Whilst they were there, the Surgeon arrived, and, after examining his head, declared that the skull was fractured. During that and the following day, the house was surrounded by crowds, anxious to know his state; and nothing might be heard amongst most of them but loud undisguised expressions of the most ample revenge. The wife was frantic; and, on seeing me, hid her face in her hands, exclaiming,

"'Ah, Sir, I knew it would come to this; and you, too, told him the same thing. *My* curse and *God's* curse on it for quarrelling! Will it never stop in the counthry till they rise sometime and murther one another out of the face?'

"As soon as the swelling in his head was reduced, the Surgeon performed the operation of trepanning, and thereby saved his life; but his strength and intellect were gone, and he just lingered four months, a feeble, drivelling simpleton, until, in consequence of a cold, which produced inflammation in the brain, he died, as hundreds have died before, the victim of party spirit."

Such was the account which I heard of my old school-fellow, Denis Kelly; and, indeed, when I reflected upon the nature of the education he received, I could not but admit that the consequences were such as might naturally be expected to result from it.

The next morning a relation of Mrs. Kelly's came down to my brother, hoping that, as they wished to have as decent a funeral as possible, he would be so kind as to attend it.

"Musha, God knows, sir," said the man, "it 's poor Denis, heavens be his bed! that had the regard and reverence for every one, young and ould, of your

father's family; and it's himself that would be the proud man, if he was living, to see you, sir, riding after his coffin."

"Well," said my brother, "let Mrs. Kelly know that I shall certainly attend, and so will my brother, here, who has come to pay me a visit.—Why, I believe, Tom, you forget him!"

"Your brother, sir! Is it Master Toby, that used to cudgel the half of the counthry when he was at school? Gad's my life, *Masther* Toby, (I was now about thirty-six) but it's your four quarters, sure enough! Arrah, thin, sir, who'd think it—you'r grown so full and stout?—but, faix, you'd always the bone in you! Ah, Masther Toby!" said he, "he's lying cowld, this morning, that would be the happy man to lay his eyes wanst more upon you. Many an' many's the winther's evening did he spend, talking about the time when you and he were *bouchals** together, and of the pranks you played at school, but especially of the time you both leathered the four Grogans, and took the apples from them—my poor fellow!—and now to be stretched a corpse, lavin' his poor widdy and childher behind him!"

I accordingly expressed my sorrow for Denis's death, which, indeed, I sincerely regretted, for he possessed materials for an excellent character, had not all that was amiable and good in him been permitted to run wild.

As soon as my trunk and travelling-bag had been brought from the inn, where I had left them the preceeding night, we got our horses, and, as we wished to show particular respect to Denis's remains, rode up, with some of our friends, to the house. When we approached, there were large crowds of the country-people before the door of this well-thatched and respectable-looking dwelling, which had three chimneys, and a set of sash-windows, clean and well glazed. On our arrival, I was soon recognised and

* Boys.

surrounded by numbers of those to whom I had formerly been known, who received and welcomed me with a warmth of kindness and sincerity, which it would be in vain to look for among the peasantry of any other nation.

Indeed, I have uniformly observed, that when no religious or political feeling influences the heart and principles of an Irish peasant, he is singularly sincere and faithful in his attachments, and has always a bias to the generous and disinterested. To my own knowledge, circumstances frequently occur, in which the ebullition of party spirit is altogether temporary, subsiding after the cause that produced it has passed away, and leaving the kind peasant to the natural, affectionate, and generous impulses of his character. But poor *Paddy*, unfortunately, is as combustible a material in politics or religion, as in fighting—thinking it his duty to take the weak* side, without any other consideration, than because it *is* the weak side.

When we entered the house I was almost suffocated with the strong fumes of tobacco-smoke, snuff, whiskey; and as I had been an old school-fellow of Denis's, my appearance was the signal for a general burst of grief among his relations, in which the more distant friends and neighbours of the deceased joined, to keep up the *keening*.

I have, often, indeed always, felt that there is something extremely touching in the Irish cry; in fact, that it breathes the very spirit of wild and natural sorrow. The Irish peasantry, whenever a death takes place, are exceedingly happy in seizing

* A gentleman once told me an anecdote, of which he was an eye-witness. Some peasants, belonging to opposite factions, had met under peculiar circumstances; there were, however, two on one side, and four on the other; in this case, there was likely to be no fight; but, in order to balance the number, one of the more numerous party joined the weak side "bekaise, boys, it would be a burnin' shame, so it would, for four to kick two; and, except I join them, by the powers, there's no chance of there being a bit of sport, or a row, at all at all!" Accordingly, he did join them, and the result of it was, that he and his party were victorious; so honestly did he fight!

upon any contingent circumstances that may occur, and making them subservient to the excitement of grief for the departed, or the exaltation and praise of his character and virtues. My entrance was a proof of this,—I had scarcely advanced to the middle of the floor, when my intimacy with the deceased, our boyish sports, and even our quarrels, were adverted to with a natural eloquence and pathos, that, in spite of my firmness, occasioned me to feel the prevailing sorrow. They spoke, or chaunted mournfully, in Irish; but the substance of what they said was as follows:—

"Oh, Denis, Denis, avourneen! you're lying low, this morning of sorrow!—lying low are you, and does not know who it is (alluding to me) that is standing over you, weeping for the days you spent together in your youth! It's yourself, *acushla agus asthore machree* (the pulse and beloved of my heart), that would stretch out the right hand warmly to welcome him to the place of his birth, where you had both been so often happy about the green hills and valleys with each other! He's here now, standing over you; and it's he, of all his family, kind and respectable as they are, that was your own favourite, Denis, *avourneen dhelish*! He alone was the companion that you loved!—with no other could you be happy!—For him did you fight, when he wanted a friend in your young quarrels! and if you had a dispute with him, were you not sorry for it? Are you not now stretched in death before him, and will he not forgive you?"

All this was uttered, of course, extemporaneously, and without the least preparation. They then passed on to an enumeration of his virtues as a father, a husband, son, and brother—specified his worth as he stood related to society in general, and his kindness as a neighbour and a friend.

An occurrence now took place which may serve, in some measure, to throw light upon many of the atrocities and outrages which take place in Ireland. Before I mention it, however, I think it necessary to

make a few observations relative to it. I am convinced that those who are intimately acquainted with the Irish peasantry, will grant that there is not on the earth a class of people in whom the domestic affections of blood-relationship are so pure, strong, and sacred. The birth of a child will occasion a poor man to break in upon the money set apart for his landlord, in order to keep the christening, surrounded by his friends and neighbours, with due festivity. A marriage exhibits a spirit of joy, an exuberance of happiness and delight, to be found only in the Green Island; and the death of a member of a family is attended with a sincerity of grief, scarcely to be expected from men so much the creatures of the more mirthful feelings. In fact, their sorrow is a solecism in humanity—at once deep and loud—mingled up, even in its deepest paroxysms, with a laughter-loving spirit. It is impossible that an Irishman, sunk in the lowest depths of affliction, could permit his grief to flow in all its sad solemnity, even for a day, without some glimpse of his natural humour throwing a faint and rapid light over the gloom within him. No: there is an amalgamation of sentiments in his mind which, as I said before, would puzzle any philosopher to account for. Yet it would be wrong to say, though his grief has something of an unsettled and ludicrous character about it, that he is incapable of the most subtle and delicate shades of sentiment, or the deepest and most desolating intensity of sorrow. But he laughs off those heavy vapours which hang about the moral constitution of the people of other nations, giving them a morbid habit, which leaves them neither strength nor firmness to resist calamity—which they feel less keenly than an Irishman, exactly as a healthy man will feel the pangs of death with more acuteness than one who is wasted away by debility and decay. Let any man witness an emigration, and he will satisfy himself that this is true. I am convinced that Goldsmith's inimitable description of one in his "Deserted Village," was a picture drawn from actual observation. Let him ob-

serve the emigrant, as he crosses the Atlantic, and he will find, although he joins the jest, and the laugh, and the song, that he will seek a silent corner or a silent hour, to indulge the sorrow which he still feels for the friends, the companions, and the native fields that he has left behind him. This constitution of mind is beneficial: the Irishman seldom or never hangs himself, because he is capable of too much real feeling to permit himself to become the slave of that which is factitious. There is no void in his affections or sentiments, which a morbid and depraved sensibility could occupy; but his feelings, of what character soever they may be, are strong, because they are fresh and healthy. For this reason, I maintain, that when the domestic affections come under the influence of either grief or joy, the peasantry of no nation are capable of feeling so deeply. Even on the ordinary occasions of death, sorrow, though it alternates with mirth and cheerfulness, in a manner peculiar to themselves, lingers long in the unseen recesses of domestic life: *any hand therefore, whether by law or violence, that plants a wound* HERE, *will suffer to the death.*

When my brother and I entered the house, the body had just been put into the coffin: and it is usual after this takes place, and before it is nailed down, for the immediate relatives of the family to embrace the deceased, and take their last look and farewell of his remains. In the present instance, the children were brought over, one by one, to perform that trying and melancholy ceremony. The first was an infant on the breast, whose little innocent mouth was held down to that of its dead father; the babe smiled upon his still and solemn features, and would have played with his grave-clothes, but that the murmur of unfeigned sorrow, which burst from all present, occasioned it to be removed. The next was a fine little girl, of three or four years, who inquired where they were going to bring her daddy, and asked if he would not soon come back to *her*.

"My daddy's sleeping a long time," said the child,

"but I'll waken him till he sings me 'Peggy Slevin.' I like my daddy best, bekase I sleep wid him—and he brings me good things from the fair; he bought me this ribbon," said she, pointing to a ribbon which he had purchased for her.

The rest of the children were sensible of their loss, and truly it was a distressing scene. His eldest son and daughter, the former about fourteen, the latter about two years older, lay on the coffin, kissing his lips, and were with difficulty torn away from it.

"Oh!" said the boy, "he is going from us, and night or day we will never see him or hear him more! Oh! father—father—is that the last sight we are ever to see of your face? Why, father dear, did you die, and leave us for ever?—for ever—wasn't your heart good to us, and your words kind to us—Oh! your last smile is smiled—your last kiss given—and your last kind word spoken to your childhre that you loved, and that loved you as we did. Father, core of my heart, are you gone for ever, and your voice departed? Oh! the murdherers, oh! the murdherers, the murdherers! he exclaimed, "that killed my father; for only for them, he would be still wid us: but, by the God that's over me, if I live, night or day I will not rest, till I have blood for blood; nor do I care who hears it, nor if I was hanged the next minute."*

As these words escaped him, a deep and awful murmur of suppressed vengeance burst from his relations. At length their sorrow became too strong to be repressed; and as it was the time to take their last embrace and look of him, they came up, and after fixing their eyes on his face in deep affliction, their lips began to quiver, and their countenances became convulsed. They then burst out simultaneously into a tide of violent grief, which, after having indulged in it for some time, they checked. But the resolution of revenge was stronger than their grief, for, standing over his dead body, they repeated, almost word for

* Such were the words.

word, the vow of vengeance which the son had just sworn. It was really a scene dreadfully and terribly solemn; and I could not avoid reflecting upon the mystery of nature, which can, from the deep power of domestic affection, cause to spring a determination to crime of so black a dye. Would to God that our peasantry had a clearer sense of moral and religious duties, and were not left so much as they are to the headlong impulse of an ardent temperament, and an impetuous character; and would to God that the clergy who superintend their morals had a better knowledge of human nature, and a more liberal education!

During all this time the heart-broken widow sat beyond the coffin, looking upon what passed with a stupid sense of bereavement; and when they had all performed this last ceremony, it was found necessary to tell her that the time was come for the procession of the funeral, and that they only waited for her to take, as the rest did, her last look and embrace of her husband. When she heard this, it pierced her like an arrow: she became instantly collected, and her complexion assumed a dark shade of despairing anguish, which it was an affliction even to look upon. She then stooped over the coffin, and kissed him several times, after which she ceased sobbing, and lay silently with her mouth to his.

The character of a faithful wife sorrowing for a beloved husband has that in it which compels both respect and sympathy. There was not at this moment a dry eye in the house. She still lay silent on the coffin; but, as I observed that her bosom seemed not to heave as it did a little before, I was convinced that she had become insensible. I accordingly beckoned to Kelly's brother, to whom I mentioned what I had suspected; and, on his going over to ascertain the truth, he found her as I had said. She was then brought to the air, and after some trouble recovered; but I recommended them to put her to bed, and not to subject her to any unnecessary anguish, by a custom

which was really too soul-piercing to endure. This, however, was, in her opinion, the violation of an old rite, sacred to her heart and affections—she would not hear of it for an instant. Again she was helped out between her brother and brother-in-law; and, after stooping down, and doing as the others had done—

"Now," said she, "I will sit here, and keep him under my eye as long as I can—surely you won't blame me for it; you all know the kind husband he was to me, and the good right I have to be sorry for him! Oh!" she added, "is it thrue at all?—is he, my own Denis, the young husband of my early—and my first love, in good airnest dead, and going to leave me here—me, Denis, that you loved so tindherly, and our childhre, that your brow was never clouded aginst? Can I believe myself, or is it a dhrame? Denis, *avick machree! avick machree!** your hand was dreaded, and a good right it had, for it was the manly hand, that was ever and always raised in defence of them that wanted a friend; abroad, in the faction-fight, against the oppressor, your name was ever feared, *acushla!*—but *at home*—AT HOME—*where was your fellow?* Denis, agrah, do you know the lips that's spaking to you?—your young bride—your heart's light—Oh! I remimber the day you war married to me like yesterday. Oh! avourneen, then and since wasn't the heart of your own Honor bound up in you—yet not a word even to me. Well, agrah machree, 'tisn't your fault, it's the first time you ever refused to spake to your own Honor. But you're dead, avourneen, or it wouldn't be so—you're dead before my eyes—husband of my heart, and all my hopes and happiness goes into the coffin and the grave along wid you, for ever!"

All this time she was rocking herself from side to side, her complexion pale and ghastly as could be conceived, and the tears streaming from her eyes.

* Son of my heart! Son of my heart!

When the coffin was about to be closed, she retired until it was nailed down, after which she returned with her bonnet and cloak on her, ready to accompany it to the grave. I was astonished—for I thought she could not have walked two steps without assistance; but it was the custom, and to neglect it, I found, would have thrown the imputation of insincerity upon her grief. While they were preparing to bring the coffin out, I could hear the chat and conversation of those who were standing in crowds before the door, and occasionally a loud, vacant laugh, and sometimes a volley of them, responsive to the jokes of some rustic wit, probably the same person who acted master of the revels at the wake.

Before the coffin was finally closed, Ned Corrigan, whom I had put to flight the preceding night, came up and repeated the *De profundis** over the corpse. When this was finished, he got a jug of holy water, and after dipping his thumb in it, first made the sign of the cross upon his own forehead, and afterwards sprinkled it upon all present, giving my brother and myself an extra complement, supposing, probably, that we stood most in need of it.

The coffin was then brought out and placed upon four chairs before the door, to be keened; and, in the mean time, the friends and well-wishers of the deceased were brought into the room to get each a glass of whiskey, as a token of respect. I observed, also, that such as had not seen any of Kelly's relations until then, came up, and shaking hands with them, said—"I'm sorry for your loss!" This expression of condolence was uniform, and the usual reply was,—"Thank you, Mat, or Jim!" with a pluck of the skirt, accompanied by a significant nod, to follow. They then got a due share of whiskey; and it was curious, after they came out, their faces a little flushed, and their eyes watery with the strong, ardent spirits, to

* The *De profundis* is the psalm which in the Roman Catholic Church is repeated over the dead.

hear with what heartiness and alacrity they entered into Denis's praises.

When he had been keened in the street, there being no hearse, the coffin was placed upon two handspikes which were fixed across, but parallel to each other under it. These were borne by four men, one at the end of each, with the point of it crossing his body a little below his stomach; in other parts of Ireland, the coffin is borne upon a bier on the shoulders, but this is more convenient and less distressing.

When we got out upon the road, the funeral was of great extent—for Kelly had been highly respected. On arriving at the *merin* which bounded the land he had owned, the coffin was laid down, and a loud and wailing *keene* took place over it. It was again raised, and the funeral proceeded in a direction which I was surprised to see it take, and it was not until an acquaintance of my brother's had explained the matter that I understood the cause of it. In Ireland, when a murder is perpetrated, it is sometimes usual, as the funeral proceeds to the grave-yard, to bring the corpse to the house of him who committed the crime, and lay it down at his door, while the relations of the deceased kneel down, and, with an appalling solemnity, utter the deepest imprecations, and invoke the justice of heaven on the head of the murderer. This, however, is generally omitted if the residence of the criminal be completely out of the line of the funeral, but if it be possible, by any circuit, to approach it, this dark ceremony is never omitted. In cases where the crime is doubtful, or unjustly imputed, those who are thus visited come out, and laying their right hand upon the coffin, protest their innocence of the blood of the deceased, calling God to witness the truth of their asseverations; but, in cases where the crime is clearly proved against the murderer, the door is either closed, the ceremony repelled by violence, or the house abandoned by the inmates until the funeral passes.*

* Many of these striking and startling old customs have nearly disappeared.

The death of Kelly, however, could not be actually, or, at least, directly, considered a murder, for it was probable that Grimes did not inflict the stroke with the intention of taking away his life, and, besides, Kelly survived it four months. Grimes's house was not more than fifteen perches from the road: and when the corpse was opposite the little bridle-way that led up to it, they laid it down for a moment, and the relations of Kelly surrounded it, offering up a short prayer, with uncovered heads. It was then borne toward the house, whilst the keening commenced in a loud and wailing cry, accompanied with clapping of hands, and every other symptom of external sorrow. But, independent of their compliance with this ceremony, as an old usage, there is little doubt that the appearance of anything connected with the man who certainly occasioned Kelly's death, awoke a keener and more intense sorrow for his loss. The wailing was thus continued until the coffin was laid opposite Grimes's door; nor did it cease then, but, on the contrary, was renewed with louder and more bitter lamentations.

As the multitude stood compassionating the affliction of the widow and orphans, it was the most impressive and solemn spectacle that could be witnessed. The very house seemed to have a condemned look; and, as a single wintry breeze waved a tuft of long grass that grew on a seat of turf at the side of the door, it brought the vanity of human enmity before my mind with melancholy force. When the keening ceased, Kelly's wife, with her children, knelt, their faces towards the house of their enemy, and invoked, in the strong language of excited passion, the justice of heaven upon the head of the man who had left her a widow, and her children fatherless. I was anxious to know if Grimes would appear to disclaim the intention of murder; but I understood that he was at market—for it happened to be market-day.

"Come out!" said the widow—"come out, and look at the sight that's here before you! Come and view

your own work! Lay but your hand upon the coffin, and the blood of him you murdhered will spout, before God and these Christian people, in your guilty face! But, oh! may the Almighty God bring *this home to you!**—May you never lave this life, John Grimes, till worse nor has overtaken me and mine falls upon you and yours! May our curse light upon you this day!—the curse, I say, of the widow and the orphans, that your bloody hand has made us, may it blast you! May you, and all belonging to you, wither off the 'airth! Night and day, sleeping and waking—like snow off the ditch may you melt, until your name and your place be disremimbered, except to be cursed by them that will hear of you and your hand of murther! Amin, we pray God this day!—and the widow and orphan's prayer will not fall to the ground while your guilty head is above it! Childhre, did you all say it?"

At this moment a deep, terrific murmur, or rather ejaculation, corroborative of assent to this dreadful imprecation, pervaded the crowd in a fearful manner; their countenances darkened, their eyes gleamed, and their scowling visages stiffened into an expression of determined vengeance.

When these awful words were uttered, Grimes's wife and daughters approached the window in tears, sobbing, at the same time, loudly and bitterly.

"You're wrong," said the wife—"you're wrong, Widow Kelly, in saying that my husband *murdhered* him!—he did *not* murdher him; for, when you and yours were far from him, I heard John Grimes declare before the God who's to judge him, that he had no thought or intention of taking his life; he struck him in anger, and the blow did him an injury that was not intended. Don't curse him, Honor Kelly," said she, "don't curse him so fearfully; but, above all, don't curse me and my innocent childhre, for *we* never harmed you, nor wished you ill! *But it was this party work did it!* Oh, my God!" she exclaimed,

* Does not this usage illustrate the proverb of the guilt being brought home to a man, when there is no doubt of his criminality?

wringing her hands in utter bitterness of spirit, "when will it be ended between friends and neighbours, that ought to live in love and kindness together, instead of fighting in this blood-thirsty manner!"

She then wept more violently, as did her daughters.

"May God give me mercy in the last day, Mrs. Kelly, as I pity from my heart and soul you and your orphans," she continued; "but don't curse us, for the love of God—for you know we should forgive our enemies, as we ourselves, that are the enemies of God, hope to be forgiven."

"May God forgive me, then, if I have wronged you or your husband," said the widow, softened by their distress; "but you know that whether he intended his life or not, the stroke he gave him has left my childher without a father, and myself dissolate. Oh, heavens above me!" she exclaimed, in a scream of distraction and despair, "is it possible—is it thrue—that my manly husband—the best father that ever breathed the breath of life—my own Denis, is lying dead—murdhered before my eyes? Put your hands on my head, some of you—put your hands on my head, or it will go to pieces. Where are you, Denis—where are you, the strong of hand, and the tender of heart? Come to me, darling, I want you in my distress. I want comfort, Denis; and I'll take it from none but yourself, for kind was your word to me in all my afflictions!"

All present were affected; and, indeed, it was difficult to say whether Kelly's wife or Grimes's was more to be pitied at the moment. The affliction of the latter and of her daughters was really pitiable; their sobs were loud, and the tears streamed down their cheeks like rain. When the widow's exclamations had ceased, or rather were lost in the loud cry of sorrow which were uttered by the keeners and friends of the deceased—they, too, standing somewhat apart from the rest, joined in it bitterly; and the solitary wail of Mrs. Grimes, differing in character from that

of those who had been trained to modulate the most profound grief into strains of a melancholy nature, was particularly wild and impressive. At all events, her christian demeanour, joined to the sincerity of her grief, appeased the enmity of many; so true is it that a soft answer turneth away wrath. I could perceive, however, that the resentment of Kelly's male relations did not appear to be in any degree moderated.

The funeral again proceeded, and I remarked that whenever a strange passenger happened to meet it, he always turned back, and accompanied it for a short distance, after which he resumed his journey, it being considered unlucky to omit this usage on meeting a funeral. Denis's residence was not more than two miles from the churchyard, which was situated in the town where he had received the fatal blow. As soon as we had got on about the half of this way, the priest of the parish met us, and the funeral, after proceeding a few perches more, turned into a green field, in the corner of which stood a table with the vestments for saying mass spread upon it.

The coffin was then laid down once more, immediately before this temporary altar; and the priest, after having robed himself in sable vestments, as is usual in the case of death, began to celebrate mass for the dead, the congregation all kneeling. When this was finished, the friends of the deceased approached the altar, and after some private conversation, the priest turned round, and inquired aloud—

"Who will give *Offerings?*"

The people were acquainted with the manner in which this matter is conducted, and accordingly knew what to do. When the priest put the question, Denis's brother, who was a wealthy man, came forward, and laid down two guineas on the altar; the priest took this up, and putting it on a plate, set out among the multitude, accompanied by two or three of those who were best acquainted with the inhabitants of the parish. He thus continued putting the question, distinctly, after each man had paid; and according

as the money was laid down, those who accompanied the priest pronounced the name of the person who gave it, so that all present might hear it. This is also done to enable the friends of the deceased to know not only those who show them this mark of respect, but those who neglect it, in order that they may treat them in the same manner on similar occasions. The amount of money so received is very great; for there is a kind of emulation among the people, as to who will act with most decency and spirit, that is exceedingly beneficial to the priest. In such instances the difference of religion is judiciously overlooked; for the Protestants pay as well as the rest. When the priest came round to where I stood, he shook hands with my brother, with whom he appeared to be on very friendly and familiar terms; he and I were then introduced to each other.

"Come," said he, with a very droll expression of countenance, shaking the plate at the same time up near my brother's nose—"Come, Mr. D'Arcy, down with your offerings."

"Ah!" said my brother, pulling out a guinea, "I would with the greatest pleasure; but I fear this guinea is not orthodox. I'm afraid it has the heretical mark upon it."

"In that case," replied his reverence, laughing heartily, "your only plan is to return it to the bosom of the church, by laying it on the plate here—it will then be *within the pale*, you know."

This reply produced a great deal of good-humour among that part of the crowd which immediately surrounded them—not excepting his nearest relations, who laughed heartily.

"Well," said my brother, as he laid it on the plate, "how many prayers will you offer up in my favour for this?"

"Leave *that* to myself," said his Reverence, looking at the *money*.

He then held the plate over to me in a droll manner; and I added another guinea to my brother's

gift; for which I had the satisfaction of having my name called out so loud, that it might be heard a quarter of a mile off.

"God bless you, sir," said the priest, "and I thank you."

"John," said I, when he left us, "I think that is a pleasant and rather a sensible man?"

"He's as jovial a soul," replied my brother, "as ever gave birth to a jest, and he sings a right good song. Many a convivial hour have he and I spent together; and a more hospitable man besides, never yet existed. Although firmly attached to his own religion, he is no bigot; but, on the contrary, an excellent, liberal, and benevolent man."

When the offerings were all collected, he returned to the altar, and after hastily shaking the holy water on the crowd, the funeral moved on. It was now two o'clock, the day clear and frosty, and the sun unusually bright for the season. During mass, many were added to those who formed the funeral train at the outset; so that, when we got out upon the road, the procession appeared very large. After this, few or none joined it; for it is esteemed by no means "*decent*" to do so *after* mass, because, in that case, the matter is ascribed to an evasion of the offerings; but those whose delay has not really been occasioned by this motive, make it a point to pay them at the graveyard, or after the interment, and sometimes even on the following day—so jealous are the peasantry of having any degrading suspicion attached to their generosity.

The order of the funeral now was as follows:—Foremost the women—next to them the corpse, surrounded by the relations—the eldest son, in deep affliction, "led the coffin," as chief mourner, holding in his hand the corner of a sheet or piece of linen, fastened to the *mort-cloth*, called moor-cloth. After the coffin came those who were on foot, and in the rear were the equestrians. When we were a quarter of a mile from the churchyard, the funeral was met by a dozen of

singing-boys, belonging to a chapel choir, which the priest, who was fond of music, had some time before formed. They fell in, two by two, immediately behind the corpse, and commenced singing the *Requiem*, or Latin hymn for the dead.

The scene through which we passed at this time, though not clothed with the verdure and luxuriant beauty of summer, was, nevertheless, marked by that solemn and decaying splendour which characterises a fine country, lit up by the melancholy light of a winter setting sun. It was, therefore, much more in character with the occasion. Indeed I felt it altogether beautiful; and, as the "dying day-hymn stole aloft," the dim sun-beams fell, through a vista of naked motionless trees, upon the coffin, which was borne with a slower and more funeral pace than before, in a manner that threw a solemn and visionary light upon the whole procession. This, however, was raised to something dreadfully impressive, when the long train, thus proceeding with a motion so mournful, was seen, each, or at least the majority of them, covered with a profusion of crimson ribbons, to indicate that the corpse they bore owed his death to a deed of murder.* The circumstance of the sun glancing his rays upon the coffin was not unobserved by the peasantry, who considered it as a good omen to the spirit of the departed.

As we went up the street which had been the scene of the quarrel that proved so fatal to Kelly, the coffin was again laid down on the spot where he received his death-blow; and, as was usual, the wild and melancholy *keene* was raised. My brother saw many of Grime's friends among the spectators, but he himself was not visible. Whether Kelly's party saw them or not, we could not say; if they did, they seemed not to notice them, for no expression of revenge or indignation escaped them.

* Certainly this wearing of red ribbons gives a very dreadful aspect to a funeral procession. It is not many years since it was witnessed in my native parish.

At length, we entered the last receptacle of the dead. The coffin was now placed upon the shoulders of the son and brothers of the deceased, and borne round the churchyard; whilst the priest, with his stole upon him, preceded it, reading prayers for the eternal repose of the soul. Being then laid beside the grave, a "De profundis" was repeated by the priest and the mass-server. The priest now took the shovel in his own hands, and threw in the three first shovelsful—one in the name of the Father, one in the name of the Son, and one in the name of the Holy Ghost. The sexton then took it, and in a short time Denis Kelly was fixed for ever in his narrow bed.

While these ceremonies were going forward, the churchyard presented a characteristic picture. Beside the usual groups who straggle through the place, to amuse themselves by reading the inscriptions on the tombs, you might see many individuals kneeling on particular graves, where some relation lay—for the benefit of whose soul they offered up their prayers with an attachment and devotion which one cannot but admire. Sometimes all the surviving members of the family would assemble, and repeat a *Rosary* for the same purpose. Again, you might see an unhappy woman beside a newly-made grave, giving way to lamentation and sorrow for the loss of a husband, or of some beloved child. Here, you might observe the "last bed" ornamented with hoops, decked in white paper, emblematic of the virgin innocence of the individual who slept below;—there, a little board-cross informing you that "this monument was erected by a disconsolate husband to the memory of his beloved wife." But that which excited greatest curiosity was a sycamore tree, which grew in the middle of the burying-ground.

It is necessary to inform the reader, that in Ireland many of the church-yards are exclusively appropriated to the interment of Roman Catholics, and, consequently, the corpse of no one who had been a Protestant would be permitted to pollute or desecrate

them. This was one of them: but it appears that, by some means or other, the body of a Protestant *had* been interred in it—and hear the consequence! The next morning heaven marked its disapprobation of this awful visitation by a miracle; for, ere the sun rose from the east, a full-grown sycamore had shot up out of the heretical grave, and stands there to this day, a monument at once of the profanation and its consequence. Crowds were looking at this tree, feeling a kind of awe, mingled with wonder, at the deed which drew down such a visible and lasting mark of God's displeasure. On the tombstones near Kelly's grave, men and women were seated, smoking tobacco to their very heart's content: for, with that profusion which characterises the Irish in everything, they had brought out large quantities of tobacco, whiskey, and bunches of pipes. On such occasions it is the custom for those who attend the wake or funeral to bring a full pipe home with them; and it is expected that, as often as it is used, they will remember to say, "God be merciful to the soul of him that this pipe was over."

The crowd, however, now began to disperse; and the immediate friends of the deceased sent the priest, accompanied by Kelly's brother, to request that we would come in, as the last mark of respect to poor Denis's memory, and take a glass of wine and a cake.

"Come, Toby," said my brother, "we may as well go in, as it will gratify them; we need not make much delay, and we will still be at home in sufficient time for dinner."

"Certainly you will," said the priest; "for you shall both come and dine with me to-day."

"With all my heart," said my brother; "I have no objection, for I know you give it good."

When we went in, the punch was already reeking from immense white jugs, that couldn't hold less than a gallon each.

"Now," said his Reverence, very properly, "you have had a decent and creditable funeral, and have

managed everything with great propriety; let me request, therefore, that you will not get drunk, nor permit yourselves to enter into any disputes or quarrels; but be moderate in what you take, and go home peaceably."

"Why, thin, your Reverence," replied the widow, "he's now in his grave, and, thank God, it 's he that had the dacent funeral all out—ten good gallons did we put over you, astore, and it 's yourself that liked the dacent thing, any how—but sure, Sir, it would shame him where he's lyin', if we disregarded him so far as to go home widout bringing in our friends, that didn't desart us in our throuble, an' thratin' them for their kindness."

While Kelly's brother was filling out all their glasses, the priest, my brother, and I, were taking a little refreshment. When the glasses were filled, the deceased's brother raised his in his hand, and said,—

"Well, gintlemen," addressing us, "I hope you 'll pardon me for not drinking your healths first; but people, you know, can't break through an ould custom, at any rate—so I give poor Denis's health that's in his *warm* grave, and God be marciful to his soul."*

The priest now winked at me to give them their own way; so we filled our glasses, and joined the rest in drinking "poor Denis's health, that's now in his warm grave, and God be merciful to his soul."

When this was finished, they then drank ours, and thanked us for our kindness in attending the funeral. It was now past five o'clock; and we left them just setting into a hard bout of drinking, and rode down to his Reverence's residence.

"I saw you smile," said he, on our way, "at the blundering toast of Mat Kelly; but it would be labour in vain to attempt setting them right. What do they know about the distinctions of more refined life? Besides, I maintain, that what they said was as well calculated to express their affection, as if they

* A fact.

had drunk honest Denis's *memory*. It is, at least, unsophisticated. But did you hear," said he, "of the apparition that was seen last night, on the mountain road above Denis's ?"

"I did not *hear* of it," I replied, equivocating a little.

"Why," said he, "it is currently reported that the spirit of a murdered pedlar, which haunts the hollow of the road at Drumfurrar bridge, chased away the two servant men as they were bringing home the coffin, and that finding it a good fit, he got into it, and walked half a mile along the road, with the wooden surtout upon him ; and, finally, that to wind up the frolic, he left it on one end half-way between the bridge and Denis's house, after putting a crowd of the countrymen to flight. I suspect some droll knave has played them a trick. I assure you, that a deputation of them, who declared that they saw the coffin move along of itself, waited upon me to know whether they ought to have put him into the coffin, or gotten another."

"Well," said my brother, in reply to him, "after dinner we will probably throw some light upon that circumstance ; for I believe my brother here knows something about it."

"So, sir," said the priest, "I perceive you have been amusing yourself at their expense ?"

I seldom spent a pleasanter evening than I did with Father Molloy (so he was called), who was, as my brother said, a shrewd, sensible man, possessed of convivial powers of the first order. He sang us several good songs ; and, to do him justice, he had an excellent voice. He regretted very much the state of party and religious feeling, which he did every thing in his power to suppress.

It was now near nine o'clock, and my brother was beginning to relate an anecdote concerning the clergyman who had preceeded Father Molloy in the parish, when a messenger from Mr. Wilson, already alluded to, came up in breathless haste, requesting the priest,

for God's sake, to go down into town instantly, as the Kelly's and the Grimeses were engaged in a fresh quarrel.

"My God!" he exclaimed—"when will this work have an end? But, to tell you the truth, gentlemen, I apprehended it; and I fear that something still more fatal to the parties will yet be the consequence. Mr. D'Arcy, you must try what you can do with the Grimeses, and I will manage the Kellys."

We then proceeded to the town, which was but a very short distance from the Priest's house; and, on arriving, found a large crowd before the door of the house in which the Kellys had been drinking, engaged in hard conflict. The priest and my brother now dashed in amongst them; and by remonstrance, and entreaty, they with difficulty succeeded in terminating the fight. They were also assisted by Mr. Wilson and other persons, who dared not until their appearance, run the risk of interfering between them. Wilson's servant, who had come for the priest, was still standing beside me, looking on; and, while my brother and Mr. Molloy were separating the parties, I asked him how the fray commenced.

"Why, Sir," said he, "it bein' market-day, the Grimeses chanced to be in town, and this came to the ears of the Kellys, who were drinking in Cassidy's here, till they got tipsy; some of them then broke out, and began to go up and down the street, shouting for the face of a murdhering Grimes. The Grimeses, Sir, happened at the time to be drinking with a parcel of their friends in Joe Sherlock's and hearing the Kellys calling out for them, why, as the dhrop, Sir, was *in* on both sides, they were soon at it. Grimes has given one of the Kellys a great bating; but Tom Grogan, Kelly's cousin, a little before we came down, I'm tould, has knocked the seven senses out of him, with a pelt of a brick-bat in the stomach."

Soon after this, however, the quarrel was got under; and, in order to prevent any more bloodshed that night, my brother and I got the Kellys together, and

brought them as far as our residence, on their way home. As they went along, they uttered awful vows, and determinations of the deepest revenge, swearing repeatedly, that they would shoot Grimes from behind a ditch, if they could not in any other manner have his blood. They seemed highly intoxicated; and several of them were cut and abused in a dreadful manner; even the women were in such a state of excitement and alarm, that grief for the deceased was, in many instances, forgotten. Several of both sexes were singing; some laughing with triumph at the punishment they had inflicted on the enemy; others of them, softened by what they had drunk, were weeping in tones of sorrow that might be heard a couple of miles off. Among the latter were many of the men, some of whom, as they staggered along, with their frieze big-coats hanging off one shoulder, clapped their hands, and roared like bulls, as if they intended, by the loudness of their grief then, to compensate for their silence when sober. It was also quite ludicrous to see the men embracing each other, sometimes in this maudlin sorrow, and at others when exalted into the very madness of mirth. Such as had been cut in the scuffle, on finding the blood trickle down their faces, would wipe it off—then look at it, and break out into a parenthetical volley of curses against the Grimeses; after which, they would resume their grief, hug each other in mutual sorrow, and clap their hands as before. In short, such a group could be seen no where but in Ireland.

When my brother and I had separated from them, I asked him what had become of Vengeance, and if he were still in the country.

"No," said he; "with all his courage and watchfulness, he found that his life was not safe; he, accordingly, sold off his property, and collecting all his ready cash, emigrated to America, where, I hear, he is doing well."

"God knows," I replied, "I shouldn't be surprised if one half of the population were to follow his

example, for the state of society here, among the lower orders, is truly deplorable." "Ay, but you are to consider now," he replied, "that you have been looking at the worst of it. If you pass an unfavourable opinion upon our countrymen when in the public-house or the quarrel, you ought to remember what they are under their own roofs, and in all the relations of private life."

The "Party Fight," described in the foregoing sketch, is unhappily no fiction, and it is certain that there are thousands still alive who have good reason to remember it. Such a fight, or I should rather say battle—for such in fact it was—did not take place in a state of civil society, if I can say so, within the last half century in this country. The preparations for it were secretly being made for two or three months previous to its occurrence, and however it came to light, it so happened that each party became cognizant of the designs of the other. This tremendous conflict, of which I was an eye-witness,—being then but about twelve years of age—took place in the town, or rather city, of Clogher, in my native county of Tyrone. The reader may form an opinion of the bitterness and ferocity with which it was fought on both sides when he is informed that the Orangemen on the one side, and the Ribbonmen on the other, had called in aid from the surrounding counties of Monaghan, Cavan, Fermanagh, and Derry; and, if I mistake not, also from Louth. In numbers, the belligerents could not have been less than from four to five thousand men. The fair day on which it occurred is known simply as "the Day of the great Fight."

DANDY KEHOE'S CHRISTENING.

OR,

THE IRISH MIDWIFE.

Of the many remarkable characters that have been formed by the spirit and habits of Irish feeling among the peasantry, there is not one so clear, distinct, and well traced, as that of the Midwife. We could mention several that are certainly marked with great precision, and that stand out in fine relief to the eye of the spectator, but none at all, who, in richness of colouring, in boldness of outline, or in firmness and force, can for a moment be compared with the Midwife. The Fiddler, for instance, lives a life sufficiently graphic and distinct; so does the Dancing-master, and so also does the Match-maker, but with some abatement of colouring. As for the Cosherer, the Senachie, the Keener, and the Foster-nurse, although all mellow-toned, and well individualized by the strong power of hereditary usage, yet do they stand dim and shadowy, when placed face to face with this great exponent of the national temperament.

It is almost impossible to conceive a character of greater self-importance than an Irish Midwife, or who exhibits in her whole bearing a more complacent consciousness of her own privileges. The Fiddler, might be dispensed with, and the Dancing-master might follow him off the stage; the Cosherer, Senachie, Keener, might all disappear, and the general business of life still go on as before. But not so with her whom we are describing; and this conviction is the

very basis of her power, the secret source from which she draws the confidence that bears down every rival claim upon the affections of the people.

Before we introduce Rose Moan to our kind readers, we shall briefly relate a few points of character peculiar to the Irish Midwife, because they are probably not in general known to a very numerous class of our readers. This is a matter which we are the more anxious to do, because it is undeniable that an acquaintance with many of the old legendary powers with which she was supposed to be invested, is fast fading out of the public memory; and unless put into timely record, it is to be feared that in the course of one or two generations more, they may altogether disappear and be forgotten.

One of the least known of the secrets which old traditionary lore affirmed to have been in possession of the midwife, was the knowledge of how beer might be brewed from heather. The Irish people believe that the Danes understood and practised this valuable process, and will assure you that the liquor prepared from materials so cheap and abundant was superior in strength and flavour to any ever produced from malt. Nay, they will tell you how it conferred such bodily strength and courage upon those who drank it, that it was to the influence and virtue of this alone that the Danes held such a protracted sway, and won so many victories in Ireland. It was a secret, however, too valuable to be disclosed, especially to enemies, who would lose no time in turning the important consequences of it against the Danes themselves. The consequence was, that from the day the first Dane set foot upon the soil of Ireland, until that upon which they bade it adieu for ever, no Irishman was ever able to get possession of it. It came to be known, however, and the knowledge of it is said to be still in the country, but must remain unavailable until the fulfilment of a certain prophecy connected with the liberation of Ireland shall take away the obligation of a most solemn oath, which bound the original re-

cipient of the secret to this conditional silence. The circumstances are said to have been these :—

On the evening previous to the final embarkation of the Danes for their own country, the wife of their prince was seized with the pains of child-birth, and there being no midwife among themselves, an Irish one was brought, who, as the enmity between the nations was both strong and bitter, resolutely withheld her services, unless upon the condition of being made acquainted with this invaluable process. The crisis it seems being a very trying one, the condition was complied with; but the midwife was solemnly sworn never to communicate it to any but a woman, and never to put it in practice until Ireland should be free, and any two of its provinces at peace with each other. The midwife, thinking very natural that there remained no obstacle to the accomplishment of these conditions but the presence of the Danes themselves, and seeing that they were on the eve of leaving the country for ever, imagined herself perfectly safe in entering into the obligation; but it so happened, says the tradition, that although the knowledge of the secret is among the Irish midwives still, yet it never could be applied, and never will, until Ireland shall be in the state required by the terms of her oath. So runs the tradition.

There is, however, one species of power with which some of the old midwives were said to be gifted, so exquisitely ludicrous, and yet at the same time so firmly fixed in the belief of many among the people, that we cannot do justice to the character without mentioning so strange an acquisition. It is this, that where a husband happens to be cruel to his wife, the midwife is able, by some mysterious charm, to inflict upon him and remove from the wife the sufferings annexed to her confinement. Some of our readers may perhaps imagine this to be incredible, but we assure them that it is strictly true. Such a superstition did prevail in Ireland among the humbler classes, and still does, to an extent which would sur-

prise any one not as well acquainted with the old Irish usages and superstitions as we happen to be. The manner in which the midwife got possession of this power is as follows :—It frequently happened that the "good people," or *Dhoine Shee*—that is, the fairies—were put to the necessity of having recourse to the aid of the midwife. On one of those occasions it seems, the good woman discharged her duties so successfully, that the fairy matron, in requital for her services and promptitude of attendance, communicated to her this secret, so formidable to all bad husbands. From the period alluded to, say the people, it has of course been gladly transmitted from hand to hand, and on many occasions resorted to with fearful but salutary effect. Within our own memory several instances of its application were pointed out to us, and the very individuals themselves, when closely interrogated, were forced to an assertion that was equivalent to an admission, "it was nothing but an attack of the cholic," which, by the way, was little else than a libel upon that departed malady. Many are the tales told of cases in which midwives were professionally serviceable to the good people ; but unless their assistance was repaid by the communication of some secret piece of knowledge, it was better to receive no payment, any other description of remuneration being considered unfortunate.

The midwife was also a great interpreter of dreams, omens, auguries, and signs of all possible sorts, and no youngsters who ever consulted her need be long at a loss for a personal view of the object of their love. They had only to seek in some remote glen or dell for a briar whose top had taken root in the ground, or a briar with two roots, as it is called : this they were to put under their pillow and sleep upon, and the certain consequence was, that the image of the future wife or husband would appear to them in a dream. She was also famous at cup-tossing ; and nothing could surpass the shrewd and sapient expression of her face as she sat solemnly peering into the

grounds of the tea for the imaginary forms of rings, and love-letters, and carriages, which were necessary to the happy purport of her divination, for she felt great reluctance to foretell calamity. She seldom, however, had recourse to card-cutting, which she looked upon as an unholy practice.

We are now to consider the midwife in the capacity of a woman not only brimful of medicinal knowledge, but possessed of many secrets, which the mere physician or apothecary could never penetrate. As a doctress, she possessed a very high reputation for all complaints incident to children and females; and where herbal skill failed, unlike the mere scientific man of diplomas, she could set physical causes and effects aside, and have recourse at once to the supernatural and miraculous.

For instance, there are two complaints which she is, beyond any other individual, celebrated for managing —that is to say, head-ache, and another malady which is anonymous, or only known to country folk by what is termed "the spool or bone of the breast being down." The first she cures by a very formal and serious process called "measuring the head." This is done by a ribbon, which she puts round the cranium, repeating, during the admeasurement, a certain prayer or charm from which the operation is to derive its whole efficacy. The measuring is performed twice—in the first instance, to show that its sutures are separated by disease, or, to speak more plainly, that the bones of the head are absolutely opened, and that as a natural consequence the head must be much larger than when the patient is in a state of health. The circumference of the first admeasurement is marked upon a ribbon, after which she repeats the charm that is to remove the head-ache, and measures the cranium again, in order to show, by a comparison of the two ribbons, that the sutures have been closed, the charm successful, and the head-ache consequently removed. It is impossible to say how the discrepancy in the measurement is brought about; but be that as

it may, the writer of this has frequently seen the operation performed in such a way as to defy the most scrutinizing eye to detect any appearance of imposture, and he is convinced that in the majority of cases there is not the slightest imposture intended. The operator is in truth a dupe to a strong and delusive enthusiasm.

When the midwife raises the spool of the breast, the operation is conducted without any assistance from the supernatural. If a boy or girl diminishes in flesh, is troubled with want of rest or of appetite, without being afflicted with any particular disease, either acute or local, the midwife puts her finger under the bone which projects over the pit of the stomach, and immediately feels that "the spool of the breast is down—in other words, she informs the parents that the bone is bent inwards, and presses upon *the heart!* The raising of this precisely resembles the operation of cupping. She gets a penny piece, which she places upon the spot affected, the patient having been first laid in a supine posture; after this she burns a little spirits in a tumbler in order to exhaust the air in it; she then presses it quickly against the part which is under the penny piece; and in a few moments, to the amazement of the lookers-on, it is drawn strongly up, and remains so until the heart-bone is supposed to be raised in such a manner as that it will not return.

The next charm for which she is remarkable among the people, is that by which a mote is taken out of the eye. The manner of doing this is as follows: A white basin is got, and a jug of the purest water; the midwife repeatedly rinses her mouth with the water, until it returns as pure and clear as when she took it. She then walks to and fro, repeating the words of the charm, her mouth all the time filled with the water. When the charm is finished, she pours the water out of her mouth into the clean basin, and will point out the mote, or whatever it may have been, floating in the water, or lying in the bottom of the vessel. In fact, you could scarcely mention a malady with which

the midwife of the old school was not prepared to grapple by the aid of a charm. The tooth-ache, the cholic, measles, childbirth, all had their respective charms. The latter especially required one of a very pithy cast. Every one knows that the power of fairies in Ireland is never so strong, nor so earnestly put forth, as in the moment of parturition, when they strive by all possible means to secure the new-born infant before it is christened, and leave a changeling in its stead. Invaluable indeed is the midwife who is possessed of a charm to prevent this, and knows how to arrange all the ceremonies that are to be observed upon the occasion, without making any mistake, for that would vitiate all. Many a time, on such occasions, have the ribs of the roof been made to crack, the windows rattled out, the door pushed with violence, and the whole house shaken as if it would tumble about their heads—and all by the fairies; but to no purpose : the charm of the midwife was a rock of defence ; the necessary precautions had been taken, and they were ultimately forced to depart in a strong blast of wind, screaming and howling with rage and disappointment as they went.

There were also charms for the diseases of cattle, to cure which there exist in Ireland some processes of very distant antiquity. We ourselves have seen elemental fire produced by the friction of two green boughs together, applied as a remedy for the blackleg and murrain. This is evidently of Pagan origin, and must have some remote affinity with the old doctrines of Baal, the ancient god of fire, whose worship was once so general in Ireland.

Of these charms it may be said that they are all of a religious character, some of them evidently the production of imposture, and others apparently of those who seriously believed in their efficacy. There is one thing peculiar about them, which is, that they must be taught to persons of the opposite sex : a man, for instance, cannot teach a charm to a man, nor a woman to a woman, but he may to a woman, as a woman

may to a man. If taught or learned in violation of this principle, they possess no virtue.

In treating of the Irish midwife, we cannot permit ourselves to overlook the superstition of the "lucky caul," which comes so clearly within her province. The caul is a thin membrane, about the consistence of very fine silk, which covers the head of a new-born infant like a cap. It is always the omen of great good fortune to the infant and parents; and in Ireland, when any one has unexpectedly fallen into the receipt of property, or any other temporal good, it is customary to say, "such a person was born with a 'lucky caul' on his head."

Why these are considered lucky, it would be a very difficult matter to ascertain. Several instances of good fortune, happening to such as were born with them, might by their coincidences form a basis for the superstition; just as the fact of three men during one severe winter having been found drowned, each with two shirts on, generated an opinion which has now become fixed and general in that parish, that it is unlucky to wear two shirts at once. We are not certain whether the caul is in general the perquisite of the midwife—sometimes we believe it is; at all events, her integrity occasionally yields to the desire of possessing it. In many cases she conceals its existence, in order that she may secretly dispose of it to good advantage, which she frequently does; for it is considered to be the herald of good fortune to those who can get it into their possession. Now, let not our English neighbours smile at us for those things, until they wash their own hands clear of such practices. At this day a caul will bring a good price in the most civilized city in the world—to wit, the good city of London—the British metropolis. Nay, to such lengths has the mania for cauls been carried there, that they have been actually advertised for in the *Times* newspaper; and it is perfectly well known that a large price will be given for them by that very intelligent class of men, the ship captains of England,

who look upon a caul as a certain preservative against shipwreck.

Of a winter evening, at the fireside, there can be few more amusing companions than a midwife of the old school. She has the smack of old times and old usages about her, and tastes of that agreeable simplicity of manners which always betokens a harmless and inoffensive heart. Her language is at once easy, copious, and minute, and if a good deal pedantic, the pedantry is rather the traditionary phraseology and antique humour which descends with her profession, than the peculiar property or bias of her individual mind. She affects much mystery, and intimates that she could tell many strange stories of high life; but she is always too honourable to betray the confidence that has been reposed in her good faith and secrecy. In her dress she always consults warmth and comfort, and seldom or never looks to appearance. Flannel and cotton she heaps on herself in abundant folds, and the consequence is, that although subject to all the inclemency of the seasons both by night and day, she is hardly ever known to be sick.

Having thus recited everything, so far as we could remember it, connected with the social antiquities of her calling, and detailed some matters not generally known, that may, we trust, be interesting to those who are fond of looking at the springs which often move rustic society, we now close this "Essay on Midwifery," and beg to bring the midwife herself personally on the stage, that she may speak and act for herself.

The village of Ballycomaisy was as pleasant a little place as one might wish to see of a summer's day. To be sure, like all other Irish villages, it was remarkable for a superfluity of "pigs, praties, and childre," which being the stock in trade of an Irish cabin, it is to be presumed that very few villages either in Ireland or elsewhere could go on properly without them. It consisted principally of one long street, which you entered from the north-west side

by one of those old-fashioned bridges, the arches of which were much more akin to the Gothic than the Roman. Most of the houses were of mud, a few of stone, one or two of which had the honour of being slated on the front side of the roof, and rustically thatched on the back, where ostentation was not necessary. There were two or three shops, a liberal sprinkling of public houses, a chapel, a little out of the town, and an old dilapidated market-house near the centre. A few little by-streets projected in a lateral direction from the main one, which was terminated on the side opposite to the north-west by a pound, through which, as usual, ran a shallow stream, that was gathered into a little gutter as it crossed the road. A crazy antiquated mill, all covered and cobwebbed with grey mealy dust, stood about a couple of hundred yards out of the town, to which two straggling rows of houses, that looked like an abortive street, led you. This mill was surrounded by a green common, which was again hemmed in by a fine river, that ran round in a curving line from under the hunchbacked arch of the bridge we mentioned at the beginning. Now, a little behind, or rather above this mill, on the skirt of the aforesaid common, stood a rather neat-looking whitish cabin with about a half a rood of garden behind it. It was but small, and consisted merely of a sleeping-room and kitchen. On one side of the door there was a window, opening on hinges; and on the outside, to the right as you entered the house, there was placed a large stone, about four feet high, backed by a sloping mound of earth, so graduated as to allow a person to ascend the stone without any difficulty. In this cabin lived Rose Moan, the midwife; and we need scarcely inform our readers that the stone in question was her mounting-stone, by which she was enabled to place herself on a pillion or crupper, as the case happened, when called out upon her usual avocation.

Rose was what might be called a *flahoolagh*, or portly woman, with a good-humoured set of Milesian

features; that is to say, a pair of red, broad cheeks, a well-set nose, allowing for the disposition to turn up, and two black twinkling eyes, with a mellow expression that betokened good nature, and a peculiar description of knowing *professional* humour that is never to be met with in any *but* a midwife. Rose was dressed in a red flannel petticoat, a warm cotton sack or wrapper, which pinned easily over a large bust, and a comfortable woollen shawl. She always wore a long-bordered morning cap, over which, while travelling she pinned a second shawl of Scotch plaid; and to protect her from the cold night air, she enfolded her precious person in a deep blue cloak of the true indigo tint. On her head, over cloak and shawl and morning cap, was fixed a black "splush hat," with the leaf strapped down by her ears on each side, so that in point of fact, she cared little how it blew, and never once dreamed that such a process as that of Raper or Mackintosh was necessary to keep the liege subjects of these realms warm and waterproof, nor that two systems should exist in Ireland so strongly antithetical to each other as those of Raper and Father Matthew.

Having thus given a brief sketch of her local habitation and personal appearance, we shall transfer our readers to the house of a young new-married farmer named Kehoe, who lived in a distant part of the parish. Kehoe was a comfortable fellow, full of good nature and credulity; but his wife happened to be one of the sharpest, meanest, most suspicious, and miserable devils that ever was raised in good-humoured Ireland. Her voice was as sharp and her heart as cold as an icicle; and as for her tongue, it was incessant and interminable. Were it not that her husband, who, though good-natured, was fiery and resolute when provoked, exercised a firm and salutary control over her, she would have starved both him and her servants into perfect skeletons. And what was still worse, with a temper that was vindictive and tyrannical, she affected to be religious,

and upon those who did not know her, actually attempted to pass herself off as a saint.

One night, about ten or twelve months after his marriage, honest Corny Kehoe came out to the barn, where slept his two farm servants, named Phil Hannigan and Barny Casey. He had been sitting by himself, composing his mind for a calm night's sleep, or probably for a curtain lecture, by taking a contemplative whiff of the pipe, when the servant wench, with a certain air of hurry, importance, and authority, entered the kitchen, and informed him that Rose Moan must immediately be sent for.

"The misthress isn't well, masther, an' the sooner she's sint for the betther. So mind my words, sir, if you plaise, an' pack aff either Phil or Barny for Rose Moan, an' I hope I won't have to ax it again—hem!"

Dandy Kehoe—for so Corny was called, as being remarkable for his slovenliness—started up hastily, and having taken the pipe out of his mouth, was about to place it on the hob; but reflecting that the whiff could not much retard him in the delivery of his orders, he sallied out to the barn, and knocked.

"Who's there?"

"Lave that, wid you, unless you wish to be shotted." This was followed by a loud laugh from within.

"Boys, get up wid all haste: it's the mistress. Phil, saddle Hollowback and fly—(puff)—fly in a jiffy for Rose Moan; an' do you, Barny, clap a backsugaun—(puff)—an Sobersides, an' be aff for the misthress's mother—(puff)."

Both were dressing themselves before he had concluded, and in a very few minutes were off in different directions, each according to the orders he had received. With Barny we have nothing to do, unless to say that he lost little time in bringing Mrs. Kehoe's mother to her aid; but as Phil is gone for a much more important character, we beg our readers to return with us to the cabin of Rose Moan, who is now fast asleep—for it is twelve o'clock of a beautiful moonlight night, in the pleasant month of August.

Tap-tap. "Is Mrs. Moan at home?" In about half a minute her warm good-looking face, enveloped in flannel, is protruded from the window.

"Who's that, *in God's name?*" The words in italics were added, lest the message might be one from the fairies.

"I'm Dandy Kehoe's servant—one of them, at any rate—an' my misthress has got a stitch in her side—ha! ha! ha!"

"Aisy, avick—so, she's *down*, thin—aisy—I'll be wid you like a bow out of an arrow. Put your horse over to 'the stone,' an' have him ready. The Lord bring her over her difficulties, anyway, amin, a chierna!"

She then pulled in her head, and in about three or four minutes sallied out, dressed as we have described her; and having placed herself on the crupper, coolly put her right arm round Phil's body, and desired him to ride on with all possible haste.

"Push an, avouchal, push an—time's precious at all times, but on business like this every minute is worth a life. But there's always one comfort, that God is marciful. Push forrid, avick."

"Never fear, Mrs. Moan. If it's in Hollowback, bedad I'm the babe that'll take it out of him. Come, ould Hackball, trot out—you don't know the message you're an, nor who you're carryin'."

"Isn't your mistress—manin' the Dandy's wife—a daughter of ould Fitzy Finnegan's, the schrew of Glendhu?"

"Faith, you may say that, Rose, as we all know to our cost. Be me song, she does have us sometimes that you might see through us; an' only for the masther—but, dang it, no matter—she's down now, poor woman, an' it's not jist the time to be rakin' up her failins'."

"It is not, an' God mark you to grace for sayin' so. At a time like this we must forget everything, only to do the best we can for our fellow-creatures. What are you lookin' at, avick?"

Now, this question naturally arose from the fact that honest Phil had been, during their short conversation, peering keenly on each side of him, as if he expected an apparition to rise from every furze-bush on the common. The truth is, he was almost proverbial for his terror of ghosts and fairies, and all supernatural visitants whatever; but upon this occasion his fears rose to a painful height, in consequence of the popular belief, that, when a midwife is sent for, the Good People throw every possible obstruction in her way, either by laming the horse, if she rides, or by disqualifying the guide from performing his duty as such. Phil, however, felt ashamed to avow his fears on these points, but still could not help unconsciously turning the conversation to the very topic he thought to have avoided.

"What war you lookin' at, avick?"

"Why, bedad, there appeared something there beyant, like a man, only it was darker. But be this and be that—hem, ehem!—if I could get my hands on him, whatsomever he"——

"Hushth, boy, hould your tongue; you don't know but it's the very word you war goin' to say might do us harm."

"— Whatsomever he is, that I'd give him a lift on Hollowback, if he happened to be any poor fellow that stood in need of it. Oh! the sorra word I was goin' to say against anything or anybody."

"You're right, dear. If you knew as much as I could tell you—push an—you'd have a dhrop o' sweat at the ind of every hair on your head."

"Be my song, I'm tould you know a power o' quare things, Mrs. Moan; an' if all that's said is thrue, you sartinly do."

Now, had Mrs. Moan and her heroic guide passed through the village of Ballycomaisy, the latter would not have felt his fears so strong upon him. The road, however, along which they were now going was a grass-grown *bohreen*, that led them from behind her cabin through a waste and lonely part of the country.

and as it was a saving of better than two miles in point of distance, Mrs. Moan would not hear of their proceeding by any other direction. The tenor of her conversation, however, was fast bringing Phil to the state she so graphically and pithily described.

"What's your name?" she asked.

"Phil Hannigan, a son of fat Phil's of Balnasaggart, an' a cousin to Paddy, who lost a finger in the Gansy (Guernsey) wars."

"I know. Well, Phil, in throth the hairs 'ud stand like stalks o' barley, upon your head, if you heard all I could mintion."

Phil instinctively put his hand up and pressed down his hat, as if it had been disposed to fly from off his head.

"Hem! ahem! Why, I'm tould it's wondherful. But is it thrue, Mrs, Moan, that you have been brought *on business* to some o' the"—here Phil looked about him cautiously, and lowered his voice to a whisper—"to some o' the fairy women?"

"Hushth, man alive—what the sorra timpted you to call them anything but the Good People? This day's Thursday—God stand betune us an' harm. No, Phil, I name nobody. But there was a woman, a midwife—mind, avick, that I don't say *who* she was—maybe I know why too, an' maybe it would be as much as my life is worth"——

"Aisey, Mrs. Moan! God presarve us! what is that tall thing there to the right?"—and he commenced the Lord's Prayer in Irish, as fast as he could get out the words.

"Why, don't you see, boy, it's a fir-tree?"

"Ay, faix, an' so it is; bedad I thought it was gettin' taller an' taller. Ay!—hut! it *is* only a tree."

"Well, dear, there was a woman, an' she was called away one night by a little gentleman dressed in green. I'll tell you the story some time—only this, that havin' done her *duty*, an' tuck no payment, she was called out the same night to a neighbour's wife, an' a purtier boy you couldn't see than she left behind her.

But it seems she happened to touch one of his eyes wid a hand that had a taste of *their* panado an it; an' as the child grew up, every one wondhered to hear him speak of the multitudes o' thim that he seen in all directions. Well, my dear, he kept never sayin' anything to them, until one day, when he was in the fair of Ballycomaisy, that he saw them whippin' away meal an' cotton an' butther, an' everything that they thought serviceable to them; so you see he could hould in no longer, an', says he to a little fellow that was very active an' thievish among them, 'Why duv you take what doesn't belong to you?' says he. The little fellow looked up at him"——

"God be about us, Rose, what is that white thing goin' along the ditch to the left of us?"

"It's a sheep, don't you see? Faix, I believe you're cowardly at night."

"Ay, faix, an' so it is; but it looked very quare, somehow."

"—An', says he, 'How do you know that?' 'Bekase I see you all,' says the other. 'An' which eye do you see us all wid?' says he again. 'Why, wid the left,' says the boy. Wid that he gave a short whiff of a blast up into the eye, an' from that day not a stime the poor boy was ever able to see wid it. No, Phil, I didn't say it was *myself*—I named *nobody*."

"An', Mrs. Moan, is it thrue that you can put the dughaughs upon them that trate their wives badly?"

"Whisht, Phil. When you marry, keep your timper—that's all. You knew long Ned Donnelly?"

"Ay, bedad, sure enough; there was quare things said about"——

"Push an, avick, push an; for who knows how some of us is wanted? You have a good masther, I believe, Phil? It's poison the same Ned would give me if he could. Push an, dear."

Phil felt that he had got his answer. The abrupt mystery of her manner and her curt allusions left him little, indeed, to guess at. In this way did the conversation continue, Phil feloniously filching, as he

thought, from her own lips, a corroboration of the various knowledge and extraordinary powers which she was believed to possess, and she ingeniously feeding his credulity, merely by enigmatical hints and masked allusions; for although she took care to affirm nothing directly or personally of herself, yet did she contrive to answer him in such a manner as to confirm every report that had gone abroad of the strange purposes she could effect.

"Phil, wasn't there an uncle o' yours up in the Mountain Bar that didn't live happily for some time wid his wife?"

"I believe so, Rose; but it was before my time, or any way when I was only a young shaver."

"An' did you ever hear how the reconcilement came betune them?"

"No, bedad," replied Phil, "I never did; an' that's no wondher, for it was a thing they never liked to spake of."

"Throth, it's thrue for you, boy. Well, I brought about——Push an, dear, push an.——They're as happy a couple now as breaks bread, any way, and that's all they wanted."

"I'd wager a thirteen it was you that did that, Rose."

"Hut, gorsoon, hould your tongue. Sure they're happy, now, I say, whosomever did it. I named nobody, nor I take no pride to myself, Phil, out o' sich things. Some people's gifted above others, an' that's all. But, Phil?"

"Well, ma'am?"

"How does the Dandy an' his scald of a wife agree? for throth I'm tould she's nothing else."

"Faix, but middlin' itself. As I tould you, she often has us as empty as a paper lanthern, wid divil a thing but the light of a good conscience inside of us. If we *pray* ourselves, begorra she'll take care we'll have the *fastin'* at first cost; so that you see, ma'am, we hould a devout situation undher her."

"An' so that's the way wid you?"

"Ay, the downright thruth, an' no mistake. Why, the stirabout she makes would run nine miles along a dale boord, an' scald a man at the far end of it."

"Throth, Phil, I never like to go next or near sich women, or sich places; but for the sake o' the innocent we must forget the guilty. So, push an, avick, push an. Who knows but it's life an' death wid us? Have you ne'er a spur on?"

"The never a spur I took time to wait for."

"Well, afther all, it's not right to let a messager come for a woman like me, widout what is called the Midwife's Spur—a spur in the head—for it has long been said that one in the head is worth two in the heel, an' so indeed it is—on business like this, any way."

"Mrs. Moan, do you know the Moriartys of Ballaghmore, ma'am?"

"Which o' them, honey?"

"Mick o' the Esker Beg."

"To be sure I do. A well-favoured dacent family they are, an' full o' the world, too, the Lord spare it to them."

"Bedad, they are, ma'am, a well-favoured* family. Well, ma'am, isn't it odd, but somehow there's neither man, woman, nor child in the parish but gives you the good word above all the women in it; but as for a midwife, why, I heard my aunt say that if ever mother an' child owended their lives to another, she did her's and the babby's to you."

The reader may here perceive that Phil's flattery must have had some peculiar design in it in connexion with the Moriartys, and such indeed was the fact. But we had better allow him to explain matters himself.

"Well, honey, sure that was but my duty; but God be praised for all, for everything depinds on Him. She should call in one o' those new-fangled women who take out their Dispatches from the Lying-in-

* This term in Ireland means "handsome"—"good-looking."

College in Dublin below; for you see, Phil, there is sich a place there—an' it stands to raison that there should be a Fondlin' Hospital beside it, which there is too, they say; but, honey, what are these poor ignorant cratures but *new lights*, every one o' them, that a dacent woman's life isn't safe wid?"

"To be sure, Mrs. Moan; an' every one knows they're not to be put in comparishment wid a woman like you, that knows sich a power. But how does it happen, ma'am, that the Moriartys does be spakin' but middlin' of you?"

"Of me, avick?"

"Ay, faix; I'm tould they spread the mouth at you sometimes, espeshily when the people does be talkin' about all the quare things you can do."

"Well, well, dear, let them have their laugh—they may laugh that win, you know. Still one doesn't like to be provoked—no indeed."

"Faix, and Mick Moriarty has a purty daughther, Mrs. Moan, an' a purty penny he can give her, by all accounts. The nerra one o' myself but would be glad to put my commedher on her, if I knew how. I hope you find yourself aisey on your sate, ma'am?"

"I do, honey. Let them talk, Phil; let them talk; it may come to their turn yet—only I didn't expect it from *them*. You! hut, avick, what chance would *you* have with Mick Moriarty's daughther?"

"Ay, every chance an' sartinty too, if some one that I know, and that every one that knows her respects, would only give me a lift. There's no use in comin' about the bush, Mrs. Moan—bedad its yourself I mane. You could do it. An' whisper, betune you an' me it would be only sarvin' them right, in regard of the way they spake of you—sayin' indeed, an' galivantin' to the world that you know no more than another woman, an' that ould Pol Doolin of Ballymagowan knows oceans more than you do."

This was, perhaps, as artful a plot as could be laid for engaging the assistance of Mrs. Moan in Phil's design upon Moriarty's daughter. He knew perfectly

well that she would not, unless strongly influenced, lend herself to anything of the kind between two persons whose circumstances in life differed so widely as those of a respectable farmer's daughter with a good portion, and a penniless labouring boy. With great adroitness, therefore, he contrived to excite her prejudices against them by the most successful arguments he could possibly use, namely, a contempt for her imputed knowledge, and praise of her rival. Still she was in the habit of acting coolly, and less from impulse than from a shrewd knowledge of the best way to sustain her own reputation, without undertaking too much.

"Well, honey, an' so you wish me to assist you? Maybe I could do it, an' maybe—But push an, dear, move him an—we'll think of it, an' spake more about it some other time. I must think of what's afore me now—so move, move, acushla; push an."

Much conversation of the same nature took place between them, in which each bore a somewhat characteristic part; for to say truth, Phil was as knowing a "boy" as you might wish to become acquainted with. In Rose, however, he had a woman of no ordinary shrewdness to encounter; and the consequence was, that each, after a little more chat, began to understand the other a little too well to render the topic of the Moriartys, to which Phil again reverted, so interesting as it had been. Rose soon saw that Phil was only a *plasthey*, or sweetener, and only "soothered" her for his own purposes; and Phil perceived that Rose understood his tactics too well to render any further tampering with her vanity, either safe or successful.

At length they arrived at Dandy Kehoe's house, and in a moment the Dandy himself took her in his arms, and, placing her gently on the ground, shook hands with and cordially welcomed her. It is very singular, but no less true, that the moment a midwife enters the house of her patient, she always uses the plural number, whether speaking in her own person or in that of the former.

"You're welcome, Rose, an' I'm proud an' happy to see you here, an' it 'ill make poor Bridget strong, an' give her courage, to know you're near her."

"How are we, Dandy? how are we, avick?"

"Oh, bedad, middlin', wishin' very much for you of coorse, as I hear"——

"Well, honey, go away now. I have some words to say afore I go in, that'll sarve us, maybe—a charm it is that has great virtue in it."

The Dandy then withdrew to the barn, where the male portion of the family were staying until the *ultimatum* should be known. A good bottle of potheen, however, was circulating among them, for every one knows that occasions of this nature usually generate a festive and hospitable spirit.

In the barn, the company were very merry, Dandy himself being as pleasant as any of them, unless when his brow became shaded by the very natural anxiety for the welfare of his wife and child, which from time to time returned upon him. Stories were told, songs sung, and jokes passed, all full of good nature and not a little fun, some of it at the expense of the Dandy himself, who laughed at and took it all in good part. An occasional *bulletin* came out through a servant maid, that matters were just in the same way; a piece of intelligence which damped Kehoe's mirth considerably. At length he himself was sent for by the midwife, who wished to speak with him at the door.

"There is a strange young gintleman inside that wants a kiss from you." This was an agreeable ceremony to Dandy, as it always is, to catch the first glimpse of one's own first-born. On entering, he found Rose sitting beside the bed in all the pomp of authority and pride of success, bearing the infant in her arms, and dandling it up and down, more from habit than any necessity that then existed for doing so.

"Well," said she, "here we are, all safe and sound, God willin'; an' if you're not the father of as purty

a young man as ever I laid eyes on, I'm not here. Corny Kehoe, come an' kiss your son, I say."

Corny advanced, somewhat puzzled whether to laugh or to cry, and taking the child up, with a smile, he kissed it five times, and as he placed it once more in Rose's arms, there was a solitary tear on its cheek.

"Arra, go an' kiss your wife, man alive, an' tell her to have a good heart, an' to be as kind to all her fellow-creatures as God has been to her this night. It isn't upon this world the heart ought to be fixed, for we see how small a thing an' how short a time can take us out of it."

"Oh, bedad," said Dandy, who had now recovered the touch of feeling excited by the child, "it would be too bad if I'd grudge her a smack." He accordingly stooped, and kissed her; but, truth to confess, he did it with a very cool and business-like air. "I know," he proceeded, "that she'll have a heart like a jyant, now that the son is come."

"To be sure she will, an' she must; or if not, *I'll* play the sorra, an' break things. Well, well, let her get strength a bit first, an' rest and quiet; an' in the meantime get the groanin'-malt ready, until every one in the house drinks the health of the stranger. My sowl to happiness, but he's a born beauty. The nerra Kehoe of you all ever was the aiquails of what he'll be yet, plaise goodness. Throth, Corny, he has daddy's nose upon him, any how. Ay, you may laugh; but, faix, it's true. You may take with him, you may own to him, anywhere. Arra, look at that! My soul to happiness, if one egg's liker another! Eh, my posey! Where was it, alanna? Ay, you're there, my duck o' diamonds! Troth, you'll be the flower o' the flock, so you will. An' now, Mrs. Kehoe, honey, we'll lave you to yourself awhile, till we thrate these poor cratures of sarvints; the likes o' them oughtn't to be overlooked; an,' indeed, they did feel a great dale itself, poor things, about you; an', moreover, they'll be longin' of coorse to see the darlin' here."

Mrs. Kehoe's mother and Rose superintended the

birth-treat between them. It is unnecessary to say that the young men and girls had their own sly fun upon the occasion; and now that Dandy's apprehension of danger was over, he joined in their mirth with as much glee as any of them. This being over, they all retired to rest. The next morning, Rose, after dressing the infant and performing all the usual duties that one expected from her, took her leave in these words:—

"Now, Mrs. Kehoe, God bless you an' yours, and take care of yourself. I'll see you agin on Sunday next, when it's to be christened. Good-bye, ma'am; and look you to her, Mrs. Finnegan," said she, addressing her patient's mother, "an' *banaght lath* till I see all again."

The following Sunday morning, Rose paid an early visit to her patient, for, as it was the day of young Dandy's christening, her presence was considered indispensable. There is, besides, something in the appearance and bearing of a midwife upon these occasions which diffuses a spirit of light-heartedness not only through the immediate family, but also through all who may happen to participate in the ceremony, or partake of the good cheer. In many instances it is known that the very presence of a medical attendant communicates such a cheerful confidence to his patient, as, independently of any prescription, is felt to be a manifest relief. So it is with the midwife; with this difference, that she exercises a greater and more comical latitude of consolation than the doctor, although it must be admitted that she generally falls woefully short of that conventional dress with which we cover nudity of expression. No doubt many of her choicest stock jokes, to carry on the metaphor, are a little too *fashionably* dressed to pass current out of the sphere in which they are used; but be this as it may, they are so traditional in character, and so humorous in conception, that we never knew the veriest prude to feel offended, or the morosest temperament to maintain its sourness, at their recital.

Not that she is at all gross or unwomanly in any thing she may say, but there is generally in her apothegms a passing touch of fancy—a quick but terse vivacity of insinuation, at once so full of fun and sprightliness, and that truth which all know but few like to acknowledge, that we defy any one not irretrievably gone in some incurable melancholy to resist her humour. The moment she was seen approaching the house, every one in it felt an immediate elevation of spirits, with the exception of Mrs. Kehoe herself, who knew that wherever Rose had the arrangements of the bill of fare, there was sure to be what the Irish call "full an' plinty"—"lashins an' lavins"—a fact which made her groan in spirit at the bare contemplation of such waste and extravagance. She was indeed a woman of a very un-Irish heart—so sharp in her temper and so penurious in soul, that one would imagine her veins were filled with vinegar instead of blood.

"*Banaght Dheah in shoh*" (the blessing of God be here,) Rose exclaimed on entering.

Banaght Dheah agus Murra ghuid" (the blessing of God and the Virgin on you), replied Corny, "an' you're welcome, Rose, ahagur."

"I know that, Corny. Well, how are we?—how is my son?"

"Begarra, thrivin' like a pair o' throopers."

"Thank God for it! Hav'n't we a good right to be grateful to him any way? An' is my little man to be christened to-day?"

"Indeed he is—the gossips will be here presently, an' so will *her* mother. But, Rose, dear, will you take the ordherin' of the aitin' an' drinkin' part of it?—you're bettther up to these things than we are, an' so you ought, of coorse. Let there be no want of any thing; an' if there's an overplush, sorra may care; there'll be poor mouths enough about the door for whatever's left. So, you see, keep never mindin' any hint *she* may give you—you know she's a little o' the closest; but no matther. Let there, as I said, be enough an' to spare."

"Throth, there spoke your father's son, Corny; all the ould dacency's not dead yet, any how. Well, I'll do my best. But she's not fit to be up, you know, an' of coorse, can't disturb us." The expression of her eye could not be misunderstood as she uttered this. "I see," said Corny—"devil a better, if you manage that, all's right."

"An' now I must go in, till I see how she an' my son's gettin' an: that's always my first start; bekase you know, Corny, honey, that *their* health goes afore every thing."

Having thus undertaken the task required of her, she passed into the bedroom of Mrs. Kehoe, whom she found determined to be up, in order, as she said, to be at the head of her own table.

"Well, alanna, if you must, you must; but in the name of goodness I wash my hands out of the business teetotally. Dshk, dshk, dshk! Oh, wurra! to think of a woman in your state risin' to sit at her own table! That I may never, if I'll see it, or be about the place at all. If you take your life by your own wilfulness, why, God forgive you; but it mustn't be while I'm here. Howandiver, since you're bent on it, why, give me the child, an' afore I go, any how, I may as well dress it poor thing! The heavens pity it—my little man—eh?—where was it?—cheep—that's it, a ducky; stretch away. Aye stretchin' an' thrivin' an, my son! O thin, wurra! Mrs. Kehoe, but it's you that ought to ax God's pardon for goin' to do what might lave that darlin' o' the world an orphan, may be. May God pity you, my child. If any thing happened your mother, what 'ud become of you, and what 'ud become of your poor father this day? Dshk, dshk, dshk!" These latter sounds, exclamations of surprise and regret, were produced by striking the tongue against that part of the inward gum which covers the roots of the upper teeth.

"Indeed, Rose," replied the patient, in her sharp, shrill, quick voice, "I'm able enough to get up; if I don't, we'll be harrished. Corny's a fool, an' it 'll be only rap an' rive wid every one in the place."

"Wait, ma'am if you plaise.—Where's his little barrow? Ay, I have it. Wait, ma'am till I get the child dressed, an' I'll soon take myself out o' this. Heaven presarve us! I have seen the like o' this afore—ay have I—where it was as clear as crystal *that there was somethin' over them*— ay, over them that took their own way as you're doin'."

"But if I don't get up"——

"Oh, by all manes, ma'am—by all manes. I suppose you have a laise of your life, that's all. It's what I wish I could get."

"An' must I stay here in bed all day, an' me able to rise, an' sich wilful waste as will go an too?"

"Remember you're warned. This is your first babby, God bless it, an' spare you both. But Mrs. Kehoe, does it stand to raison that you're as good a judge of these things as a woman like me, that it's my business? I ax you that, ma'am."

This poser in fact settled the question, not only by the reasonable force of the conclusion to be derived from it, but by the cool authoritative manner in which it was put.

"Well, said the other, "in that case, I suppose, I must give in. You ought to know best."

"Thank you kindly, ma'am; have you found it out at last? No, but you ought to put your two hands undher my feet for preventin' you from doin' what you intinded. That I may never sup sorrow, but it was as much as your life was worth. Compose yourself; I'll see that there's no waste, and that's enough. Here, hould my son—why, thin, isn't he the beauty o' the world, now that he has got his little dress upon him?—till I pin this apron across the windy; the light's too strong for you. There now: the light's apt to give one a head-ache when it comes in full bint upon the eyes that way. Come alanna, come an now, till I show you to your father an' them all. Wurra, thin, Mrs. Kehoe, darlin," (this was said in a low confidential whisper, and in a playful wheedling tone which baffles all description), "wurra, thin, Mrs.

Kehoe, darlin', but it's he that's the proud man, the proud Corny, this day. Rise your head a little—aisy —there now, that'll do—one kiss to my son, now, before he laives his mammy, he says, for a weeny while, till he pays his little respects to his daddy, an' to all his frinds, he says, an' thin he'll come back to mammy agin—to his own little bottle, he says."

Young Corny soon went the rounds of the whole family, from his father down to the little herd-boy who followed and took care of the cattle. Many were the jokes which passed between the youngsters on this occasion—jokes which have been registered by such personages as Rose, almost in every family in the kingdom, for centuries, and with which most of the Irish people are too intimately and thoroughly acquainted to render it necessary for us to repeat them here.

Rose now addressed herself to the task of preparing breakfast, which, in honour of the happy event, was nothing less than "tay, white bread, and Boxty," with a glass of potheen to sharpen the appetite. As Boxty, however, is a description of bread not generally known to our readers, we shall give them a sketch of the manner in which this Irish luxury is made. A basket of the best potatoes is got, which are washed and peeled raw; then is procured a tin grater, on which they are grated; the water is then shired off them, and the macerated mass is put into a clean cloth. This is caught at each end by two strong men, who twist it in opposite directions, until the contortions drive up the substance into the middle of the cloth; this, of course, expels the water also; but lest the twisting should be insufficient for that purpose, it is placed, like a cheese-cake, under a heavy weight, until it is properly dried. They then knead it into cakes, and bake it on a pan or griddle; and when eaten with butter, we can assure our readers that it is quite delicious.

The hour was now about nine o'clock, and the company asked to the christening began to assemble.

The gossips, or sponsors, were four in number; two of them wealthy friends of the family, that had never been married, and the two others a simple country pair, who were anxious to follow in the matrimonial steps of Corny and his wife. The rest were, as usual, neighbours, relatives, and *cleaveens*, to the amount of sixteen or eighteen persons, men, women, and children, all dressed in their best apparel, and disposed to mirth and friendship. Along with the rest was Bob M'Cann, the fool, who, by the way, could smell out a good dinner with as keen a nostril as the wisest man in the parish could boast of, and who on such occasions carried turf and water in quantities that indicated the supernatural strength of a Scotch brownie rather than that of a human being. Bob's qualities, however, were well proportioned to each other, for, truth to say, his appetite was equal to his strength, and his cunning to either.

Corny and Mrs. Moan were in great spirits, and indeed we might predicate as much of all who were present. Not a soul entered the house who was not brought up by Corny to an out-shot room, as a private mark of his friendship, and treated to an underhand glass of as good potheen "as ever went down the red lane," to use a phrase common among the people. Nothing upon an occasion naturally pleasant gives conversation a more cheerful impulse than this; and the consequence was, that, in a short time, the scene was animated and mirthful to an unusual degree.

Breakfast at length commenced in due form. Two bottles of whiskey were placed upon the table, and the first thing done was to administer another glass to each guest.

"Come, neighbours," said Corny, "we must dhrink the good woman's health before we ate, especially as it's the first time, anyhow."

"To be sure they will, achora, an' why not? An' if it's the first time, Corny, it won't be the last, plaise goodness! Musha! you're welcome, Mrs. M'Cann! and jist in time too"—this Rose said, addressing his

mother-in-law, who then entered. "Look at this swaddy, Mrs. M'Cann; my soul to happiness, but he's fit to be the son of a lord. Eh, a pet? Where was my darlin'? Corny, let me dip my finger in the whiskey till I rub his gums wid it. That's my bully! Eh, the heavens love it; see how it puts the little mouth about lookin' for it agin. Throth you'll have the spunk in you yet, acushla, an' it's a credit to the Kehoes you'll be, if you're spared, as you will, plaise the heavens!"

"Well, Corny," said one of the gossips, "here's a speedy uprise an' a sudden recovery to the good woman, an' the little sthranger's health, an' God bless the baker that gives thirteen to the dozen, anyhow!"

"Ay, ay, Paddy Rafferty, you'll have your joke anyway; an' throth you're welcome to it, Paddy; if you weren't, it isn't standin' for young Corny you'd be to-day."

"Thrue enough," said Rose, "an', by the dickens, Paddy isn't the boy to be long undher an obligation to any one. Eh, Paddy, did I help you there, avick? Aisy, childre: you'll smother my son if you crush about him that way." This was addressed to some of the youngsters, who were pressing round to look at and touch the infant.

"It won't be my fault if I do, Rose," said Paddy, slyly eyeing Peggy Betagh, then bethrothed to him, who sat opposite, her dark eyes flashing with repressed humour and affection. Deafness, however, is sometimes a very convenient malady to young ladies, for Peggy immediately commenced a series of playful attentions to the unconscious infant, which were just sufficient to excuse her from noticing this allusion to their marriage. Rose looked at her, then nodded comically to Paddy, shutting both her eyes, by way of a wink, adding aloud, "Throth you'll be the happy boy, Paddy; an' woe betide you if you aren't the sweetest end of a honeycomb to her. Take care an' don't bring *me* upon you. Well, Peggy, never mind, alanna; who has a betther right to his joke than the

dacent boy that's — aisy, childre: saints above! but ye'll smother the child, so you will. Where did I get him, Dinney? sure I brought him as a present to Mrs. Kehoe; I never come but I bring a purty little babby along wid me—than the dacent boy, dear, that's soon to be your lovin' husband? Arrah, take your glass, acushla; the sorra harm it 'll do you."

"Bedad, I'm afeard, Mrs. Moan. What if it 'ud get into my head, an' me's to stand for my little godson? No, bad scran to me if I could—faix, a glass 'ud be too many for me."

"It's not more than half filled, dear; but there's sense in what the girl says, Dandy, so don't press it an her."

In the brief space allotted to us we could not possibly give anything like a full and correct picture of the happiness and hilarity which prevailed at the breakfast in question. When it was over, they all prepared to go to the parish chapel, which was distant at least a couple of miles, the midwife staying at home to see that all the necessary preparations were made for dinner.

"Peggy, achora, come here. You're not carryin' that child right, alanna; but you'll know betther yet, plaise goodness. No, avillish, don't keep its little head so closely covered wid your cloak; the day's a burnin' day, the Lord guard my child; sure the laist thing in the world, when there's too much hait, 'ud smother my darlin'. Keep its head out farther, and just shade its little face that way from the sun. Och, will I ever forget the Sunday whin poor Molly M'Guigan wint to take Patt Feasthalagh's child from under her cloak to be christened, the poor infant was a corpse; an' only that the Lord put it into my head to have it privately christened, the father and mother's hearts would break. Mrs. Duggan, if the child gets cross, dear, or misses anything, act the mother by him, the little man. Eh, alanna! where was it? Where was my duck o' diamonds—my little Con Roe? My own sweety little ace o' hearts—eh, alanna! Well, God keep it, till I see it again, the jewel!"

Well, the child was baptized by the name of his father, and the persons assembled, after their return from chapel, lounged about Corny's house, or took little strolls in the neighbourhood, until the hour of dinner. This, of course, was much more convivial, and ten times more vociferous, than the breakfast, cheerful as that meal was. At dinner they had a dish, which we believe is, like the Boxty, peculiarly Irish in its composition: we mean what is called *sthilk*. This consists of potatoes and beans, pounded up together in such a manner that the beans are not broken, and on this account the potatoes are well champed before the beans are put into them. This is dished in a large bowl, and a hole made in the middle of it, into which a *miscaun* or roll of butter is thrust, and then covered up until it is melted. After this, every one takes a spoon and digs away with his utmost vigour, dipping every morsel into the well of butter in the middle, before he puts it into his mouth. Indeed, from the strong competition which goes forward, and the rapid motion of each right hand, no spectator could be mistaken in ascribing the motive of their proceeding to the principle of the old proverb, devil take the hindmost. *Sthilk* differs from another dish made of potatoes in much the same way, called *colcannon*. If there were beans, for instance, in *colcannon*, it would be *sthilk*.

After dinner the whiskey began to go round, for in these days punch was a luxury almost unknown to the class we are writing of. In fact, nobody there knew how to make it but the midwife, who wisely kept the secret to herself, aware that if the whiskey were presented to them in sush a palatable shape, they would not know when to stop, and she herself might fall short of the snug bottle that is usually kept as a treat for those visits which she continues to pay during the convalescence of her patients.

"Come, Rose" said Corny, who was beginning to soften fast, "its your turn now to thry a glass of what never seen wather," "I'll take the glass, Dandy—

'deed will I—but the truth is, I never dhrink it *hard.* No, but I'll jist take a drop o' hot wather an' a grain o' sugar, an' scald it; that an' as much carraway seeds as will lie upon a sixpence does me good: for, God help me, the stomach isn't at all sthrong wid me, in regard of bein' up so much at night, an' deprived of my nathural rest."

"Rose," said one of them, "is it thrue that you war called out one night, an' brought blindfoulded to some grand lady belongin' to the quality?"

"Wait, avick, till I make a drop o' *wan-grace** for the misthress, poor thing; an', Corny, I'll jist throuble you for about a thimbleful o' spirits to take the smell o' the hot wather off it. The poor crature, she's a little weak still, an' indeed it's wondherful how she stood it out; but, my dear, God's good to his own, an' fits the back to the burden, praise be to his name!

She then proceeded to scald the drop of spirits for herself, or, in other words, to mix a good tumbler of ladies' punch, making it, as the phrase goes, hot, strong and sweet—not forgetting the carraways, to give it a flavour. This being accomplished, she made the wan-grace for Mrs. Kehoe, still throwing in a word now and then to sustain her part in the conversation, which was now rising fast into mirth, laughter, and clamour.

"Well, but, Rose, about the lady of quality, will you tell us that?"

"Oh, many a thing happened me as well worth tellin', if you go to that; but I'll tell it to you, childre, for sure the curiosity's nathural to yez. Why, I was one night at home an' asleep, an' I hears a horse's foot gallopin' for the bare life up to the door. I immediately put my head out, an' the horseman says, 'Are you Mrs. Moan?"

"'That's the name that's an me, your honour,' says myself.

"'Dress yourself thin,' says he, 'for you're sadly wanted; dress yourself, and mount behind me, for

* A kind of gruel or meal-tea, sweetened with sugar.

there's not a moment to be lost!' At the same time I forgot to say that his hat was tied about his face in sich a way that I couldn't catch a glimpse of it. Well, my dear, we didn't let the grass grow undher our feet for about a mile or so. 'Now,' says he, 'you must allow yourself to be blindfolded, an' it is useless to oppose it, for it must be done. There's the character, maybe the life of a great lady at stake; so be quiet till I cover your eyes, or,' says he, lettin' out a great oath, 'it'll be worse for you. I'm a desperate man;' an' sure enough, I could feel the heart of him beatin' undher his ribs, as if it would burst in pieces. Well, my dears, what could I do in the hands of a man that was strong and desperate. So, says I, 'Cover my eyes an' welcome; only, for the lady's sake, make no delay.' Wid that he dashed his spurs into the poor horse, an' he foamin' an' smokin' like a lime-kiln already. Any way, in about half an hour I found myself in a grand bedroom; an' jist as I was put into the door, he whispers me to bring the child to him in the next room, as soon as it would be born. Well, sure I did so, afther lavin' the mother in a fair way. But what 'ud you have of it?—the first thing I see lyin' an the table, was a purse of money an' a case o' pistols. Whin I looked at him, I thought there was something bad in his face, he looked so black and terrible about the brows. 'Now, my good woman,' says he, 'so far you've acted well, but there's more to be done yet. Take your choice of these two,' says he, 'this purse, or the contents o' one o' these pistols, as your reward. You must murdher the child upon the spot.' In the name of God an' his Mother, be you man or devil, I defy you,' says I; 'no innocent blood 'll ever be shed by these hands.' 'I'll give you ten minutes,' says he, "to put an end to that brat there;' and wid that he cocked one o' the pistols. My dears, I had nothin' for it but to say *in* to myself a *pather* an' *ave* as fast as I could, for I thought it was all over wid me. However, glory be to God! the prayers gove me great strinth, an' I spoke stoutly.

'Whin the king of Jerusalem,' says I—'an he was a greater man than ever you'll be—whin the king of Jerusalem ordhered the midwives of Aigyp to put Moses to death, they wouldn't do it, and God presarved them in spite of him, king though he was,' says I; 'an' from that day to this it was never known that a midwife took away the life of the babe she aided into the world—No, an' I'm not goin' to be the first that'll do it.' 'The time is out,' says he, puttin' the pistol to my ear, 'but I'll give you one minute more.' 'Let me go to my knees first,' says I; 'an' now may God have mercy on my sowl, for bad as I am, I'm willin' to die, sooner than commit murdher an the innocent.' He gave a start as I spoke, an' threw the pistol down. 'Ay,' said he, 'an the innocent—an the innocent—that is thrue! But you are an extraordinary woman: you have saved that child's life, and previnted me from committing two great crimes, for it was my intintion to murdher you afther you had murdhered it.' I thin, by his ordhers, brought the poor child to its mother, and when I came back to the room, 'Take that purse,' says he, 'an' keep it as a reward for your honesty.' 'Wid the help o' God,' says I, 'a penny of it will never come into my company, so it's no use to ax me.' 'Well,' says he, 'afore you lave this, you must swear not to mintion to a livin' sowl what has happened this night, for a year and a day.' It didn't signify to me whether I mintioned it or not, so being jack-indifferent about it, I tuck the oath, and kept it. He thin bound my eyes agin, hoisted me up behind him, an' in a short time left me at home. Indeed, I wasn't the better o' the start it tuck out o' me for as good as six weeks afther!"

The company now began to grow musical; several songs were sung; and when the evening got farther advanced, a neighbouring fiddler was sent for, and the little party had a dance in the barn, to which they adjourned lest the noise might disturb Mrs. Kehoe, had they held it in the dwelling-house.

Before this occurred, however, "the midwife's glass" went the round of the gossips, each of whom drank her health, and dropped some silver, at the same time into the bottom of it. It was then returned to her, and with a smiling face she gave the following toast: —"Health to the parent stock! So long as it thrives, there will always be branches! Corny Kehoe, long live an' good health to you an' yours! May your son live to see himself as happy as his father! Youngsters, here's that you may follow a good example! The company's health in general I wish; an' Paddy Rafferty, that you may never have a blind child but you'll have a lame one to lead it! ha! ha! ha! What's the world widout a joke? I must see the good woman an' my little son afore I go; but as I won't follow yez to the barn, I'll bid yez good night, neighbours, an' the blessin' of Rose Moan be among yez!"

And so also do we take leave of our old friend, Rose Moan, the Irish midwife, who, we understand, took the last leave of the world only about a twelvemonth ago.

TALBOT AND GAYNOR,

THE IRISH PIPERS.

THOSE who minister to amusement are every where popular characters, and fully as much so in Ireland as in other countries. Here, amongst the people at large, no sort of person is more kindly regarded than the wandering fiddler or piper, two classes of artists who may be said to have the whole business of keeping Paddy in good humour upon their shoulders. The piper is especially a favourite in the primitive provinces of Munster and Connaught. In Leinster they are not so common; and in the North may be described as rare, though I am not sure but that, for this very reason, they are as welcome in Ulster as in the other provinces, their notes producing an impression which is agreeable in proportion to its novelty.

Of course it is but natural that there should exist a striking resemblance between the respective habits and modes of life which characterize the fiddler and the piper; and of the latter, as well as the former, it may be observed, that, although most of his associations are drawn from the habits of the people, in contradistinction to those of the higher classes, yet it is unquestionably true that he is strongly imbued with the lingering remains of that old feudal spirit which has now nearly departed from the country. Even although generally neglected by the gentry, and almost utterly overlooked by the nobility, yet it is a melancholy but beautiful trait of "the old feeling," which prompts him always to speak of them with respect and deference. He will admit, indeed, that there is

a degeneration; that "the good ould stock is gone;" and that "the big house is not what it used to be, whin the square's father would bring him into the parlour before all the quality, and make him play his two favourite tunes of the *Fox-Hunther's Jig* and the *Hare in the Corn*. Instead o' that, the sorra ha'porth now will sarve them but a kind of musical coffin, that they call a pianna thirty, or forty, or something that way, that to hear it 'ud make a dog sthrike his father, if he didn't behave himself."

This is the utmost length to which he carries his censure, and even this is uttered "more in sorrow than in anger." On the contrary, nothing can be more amusing than the simple and complacent pride with which he informs his hearers that, "as he passed the big house, the young square brought him in—an' it's himself that knows what the good ould smack o' the pipes is, an' more betoken, so he ought—an' kind father for him to do so—it's the ould square himself that had the true Irish relish for them. I played him all his father's favourites, both in the light way and in the sorrowful. Whin I was done, he slipped five shillings into my hand. 'Take this,' said he, 'for the sake o' thim that's gone, an' of the ould times. He spoke low, an' in a hurry, as if his heart was in what he said; an' somehow I felt a tear on my cheek at the time; for it is a sorrowful thing to think how the blessed ould airs of our counthry—the only ones that go to the heart—are now so little known an' thought of, that a fashionable lady of the present day would feel ashamed to acknowledge them, or play them in company. Fareer gair!—it's a bad sign of the times, any how—may God mend them!"

The Irish piper, from the necessary monotony of his life, is generally a man of much simplicity of character—not, however, without a cast of humour, which is at once single-minded and shrewd. His little jealousies and heart-burnings—and he has his share—form the serious evils of his life; but it is remarkable that scarcely in a single instance are these

indulged in at the expense of the agreeable fiddler, who is by no means looked upon as a rival. Not so his brother piper; for, in truth, the high and doughty spirit of competition by which they are animated, never passes out of their own class, but burns with heroic rage amongst themselves. The lengths to which this spirit has been frequently carried, are ludicrous almost beyond belief. The moment a piper's reputation is established on his beat, that moment commences his misery. Those from the neighbouring beats assail him by challenges that contain anything but principles of harmony. Sometimes, it is true, they are cunning enough to come disguised to hear him; and if they imagine that a trial of skill is not likely to redound to their credit, they slink off without allowing any one, unless some particular confidant, to become cognizant of their secret.

These comical contests were, about forty or fifty years ago, much more frequent than they have been of late. In the good old times, however, when the farmers of Ireland brewed their own beer and had whiskey for a shilling a quart, the challenges, defeats, escapes, and pursuits, which took place between persons of this class, were rich in dramatic effect, and afforded great amusement to both the gentry and the people. I remember hearing the history of a chase, in which a piper named Sullivan pursued a rival for eighteen months through the whole province of Munster before he caught him, and all in order to ascertain, by a trial of skill, whether his antagonist was more entitled to have the epithet "great" prefixed to his name than he himself. It appears that the friends and admirers of the former were in the habit of calling him "the Great Piper Reillaghan," a circumstance which so completely roused the aspiring soul of his opponent, that he declared he would never rest, night or day, until he stripped him of the epithet "great" and transferred it to his own name. He was beaten, however, and that by a manœuvre of an extraordinary kind. Reillaghan offered to play

against him while drunk—Sullivan to remain sober.

Sullivan, thrown off his guard, and anxious under *any* circumstances to be able to *boast* of a victory over such an antagonist, agreed, and was consequently overcome; the truth being, that his opponent like Carolan, when composing on the harp, was never able properly to distinguish himself as a performer unless when under the inspiration of whiskey.

Sullivan, not at all aware of the trick that the other had played upon him, of course took it for granted that, as he had stood no chance with Reillaghan, when drunk, he must have a still less one in his sobriety; and the consequence was, that the next morning it was found he had taken leave in the course of the night.

There was some years ago, playing in the taverns of Dublin, a blind piper named Talbot, whose performance was singularly powerful and beautiful. This man, though blind from his infancy, possessed mechanical genius of a high order, and surprisingly delicate and exact manipulation, not merely as a musician but as a mechanic. He used to perform in Ladly's tavern in Capel-street, where he arrived every night about eight o'clock, and played till twelve, or, as the case might be, one. He was very social, and, when drawn out, possessed much genuine Irish humour and rich conversational powers. Sometimes, at a late period of the night, he was prevailed upon to attach himself to a particular party of pleasant fellows, who remained after the house was closed, to enjoy themselves at full swing. Then it was that Talbot shone, not merely as a companion but as a performer. The change in his style and manner of playing was extraordinary; the spirit, the power, humour, and pathos which he infused into his execution, were observed by every one; and when asked to account for so remarkable a change, his reply was, "My Irish heart is warmed; I'm not now playing for money, but to please myself."

"But could you not play as well during the evening, Talbot, if you wished, as you do now?"

"No, if you were to hang me. My heart must get warmed, and Irish—I must be as I am this minute."

This, indeed, was very significant, and strongly indicative of the same genius which distinguished Neil Gow, Carolan, and other eminent musicians.

Talbot, though blind, used to employ his leisure hours in tuning and stringing organs and pianos, and mending almost every description of musical instrument that could be named. His own pipes, which he called the "grand pipes," were at least eight feet long; and for beauty of appearance, richness, and delicacy of workmanship, surpassed anything of the kind that could be witnessed; and when considered as the production of his own hands, were indeed entitled to be ranked as an extraordinary natural curiosity. Talbot played before George IV., and appeared at most of the London theatres, where his performances were received with the most enthusiastic applause. In person, Talbot was a large portly-looking man, red faced, and good-looking, though strongly marked by traces of the small pox. He always wore a blue coat, fully made, with gilt buttons, and had altogether the look of what we call in Ireland a well-dressed *badagh*, * or half-sir, which means a kind of gentleman-farmer.

His pipes, indeed, were a very wonderful instrument, or rather combination of instruments, being so complicated that no one could play upon them but himself. The tones which he brought out of them might be imagined to proceed from almost every instrument in an orchestra—now resembling the sweetest and most attenuated notes of the finest Cremona violin, and again the deep and solemn diapason of the organ. Like every Irish performer of talent that we have met with, he always preferred the

* *Badagh* signifies a churl, and was originally applied as a word of offence to the English settlers. The offensive meaning, however, is not now *always* attached to it, although it often is.

rich old songs and airs of Ireland to every other description of music; and when lit up into the enthusiasm of his profession and love of country, he has often deplored, with tears in his sightless eyes, the inroads which modern fashion had made, and was making, upon the good old spirit of the by-gone times. Nearly the last words I ever heard from his lips were highly touching, and characteristic of the man as well as the musician: "If we forget our own old music," said he, "what is there to remember in its place?"—words, alas! which are equally fraught with melancholy and truth.

The man, however, who ought to sit as the true type and representative of the Irish piper, is he whose whole life is passed among the peasantry, with the exception of an occasional elevation to the lord's hall or the squire's parlour—who is equally conversant with the English and Irish languages—has neither wife nor child, house nor home, but circulates from one village or farm-house to another, carrying mirth, amusement, and a warm welcome with him wherever he goes, and filling the hearts of the young with happiness and delight. The true Irish piper must wear a frieze coat, corduroy breeches, grey woollen stockings, smoke tobacco, drink whiskey, and take snuff; for it is absolutely necessary, from his peculiar position among the people that he should be a walking encyclopædia of Irish social usages. And so he generally is; for to the practice and cultivation of these the simple tenor of his inoffensive life is devoted.

The most perfect specimen of this class we ever were acquainted with, was a blind man known by the name of "Piper Gaynor." His beat extended through the county of Louth, and occasionally through those of Meath and Monaghan. Gaynor was precisely such a man as I have just described, both as to dress, a knowledge of English and Irish, and a thorough feeling of all those mellow old tints, which an incipient change in the spirit of Irish society threatened even *then* to obliterate. I have said he was blind, but,

unlike Talbot's, his face was smooth; and his pale placid features, while playing on his pipes, were absolutely radiant with enthusiasm and genius. He was a widower, and had won one of the fairest and most modest girls in the rich agricultural county of Louth, in spite of the competition and rivalry of many wealthy and independent suitors. But no wonder; for who could hear his magic performances without at once surrendering the whole heart and feelings to the almost preternatural influence of this miraculous enchanter? Talbot?—no, no! after hearing Gaynor, the very remembrance of the music which proceeded from the "grand pipes" was absolutely indifferent. And yet the pipes on which he played were the meanest in appearance you could imagine, and in point of size the smallest I ever saw. It is singular, however, but no less true, that we can scarcely name a celebrated Irish piper whose pipes were not known to be small, old-looking, greasy, and marked by the stains and dinges which indicate an indulgence in the habits of convivial life.

Many a distinguished piper have we heard, but never at all any we could think for a moment of comparing with Gaynor. Unlike Talbot, it mattered not when or where he played; his ravishing notes were still the same, for he possessed the power of utterly abstracting his whole spirit into his music, and any body who looked upon his pale and intellectual countenance, could perceive the lights and shadows of the Irish heart flit over it, with a change and rapidity which nothing but the soul of genius could command.

Gaynor, though comparatively unknown to any kind of fame but a local one, was yet not unknown to himself. In truth, though modest, humble, and unassuming in his manners, he possessed the true pride of genius. For instance, though willing to play in a respectable farmer's house for the amusement of the family, he never could be prevailed on to play at a *common dance;* and his reasons, which I have often

heard him urge, were such as exhibit the spirit and intellect of the man. "*My music*," said he, "isn't for *the feet* or *the floor*, but for *the ear* and *the heart;* you'll get plenty of *foot pipers*, but I'm none o' them."

I will now give a brief sketch of the last evening I ever spent in his society; and as some of his observations bore slightly upon Scotch music, they may probably be perused with the more interest by Caledonian readers.

He was seated, when I entered, at the spacious hearth of a wealthy farmer in the neighbourhood, surrounded by large chests, clean settles, and an ample dresser, whose well-scoured pewter reflected the dancing blaze of a huge turf fire. The ruddy farmer and his comely wife were placed opposite to him, their family of sons and daughters in a wide circle at a due distance, whilst behind, on the settles, were the servant men and maids, with several of the neighbours, both old and young, some sitting on chairs, and others leaning against the dresser, the tables, and the meal-chests. Within the chimney-brace depended large sides and flitches of fat bacon, and dark smoke-dried junks of hung beef; presenting altogether that agreeable manifestation of abundance which gives such a cheerful sense of solid comfort to the inmates of a substantial farmer's house.

When I made my appearance in the kitchen, he was putting a tobacco-pipe into his mouth, but held it back for a moment, and exclaimed, "I ought to know *that* foot!"—after which he extended his hand, and asked me by name how I did. He then sat a while in silence—for such was his habit—and having "sucked his *doodeen*," as they say, he began to blow his bellows, and played *Scots wha hae*. When he had finished it, "Well," I observed, "what a fine piece of martial music that is!"

"No, no," he replied, shaking his head, "there's more tears than blood in it. It's too sorrowful for war; play it as you will, it's not the thing to *rise* the heart, but to sink it."

"But what do you think, Gaynor, of the Scotch music in general?"

"Would you have me spake ill of my own?" he replied, with a smile; "sure they had it from uz."

"Well, even so; they have not made a bad use of it."

"God knows they haven't," he replied; "the Scotch airs—many o' them—*is the very breath of the heart itself.*"

Even then I was much struck with the force of this expression; but I was too young fully to perceive either its truth or beauty. The conversation then became general, and he addressed himself with a great deal of *naïvete* to the youngsters, who began to banter him on the subject of a second wife.

"How can *dark* men choose a wife, Mr. Gaynor?"

"God, avourneen, makes up in one sense what they want in another. 'Tis the ear, 'tis the ear!" continued he, with apparent emotion; "that's what will never desave you. It did not desave *me*, an' it never will desave any body—no, indeed!"

"Why how do you prove that, Ned?"

"It isn't the song," continued Ned; "no, nor the laugh; for I *knew* them that could sing like angels, and, to all appearance, were merry enough too, an' God forgive them, there was little but bittherness in them after all: but it's the every-day voice, aisy and natural; if there's sweetness in *that*, you may depind there's music in the heart it comes from; so that, as I said, childhre, it's the ear that judges."

This, coming from a man who had not his sight, was, indeed, very characteristic; and we certainly believe that the observation contains a great deal of moral truth—at least Shakspeare was certainly of the same opinion.

"Now, childhre," said he, "hadn't we betther have a dance? and afther that I'll play all your favourites. So now, trim your heels for a dance. What's the world good for if we don't take it aisy?"

After playing the old bard's exquisite air, the

youngsters, myself among the rest, joined in the dance. The punch being then introduced, a happy night was spent in chat, music, rich old legends, and traditions, principally furnished by Gaynor himself; who, in addition to his many social and amusing qualities, possessed in a high degree the free and fluent powers peculiar to the old Irish senachie.

Such is a very feeble and imperfect sketch of the Irish piper, a character whom his countrymen love and respect, and in every instance treat with the kindness and cordiality due to a relation. Indeed, the musicians of Ireland are as harmless and inoffensive a class of persons as ever existed; and there can be no greater proof of this than the very striking fact, that, in the criminal statistics of the country, the name of an Irish piper or fiddler, &c., has scarcely, if ever, been known to appear.

FRANK FINNEGAN,

THE FOSTER BROTHER.

THERE is scarcely a trait of human nature involved in more mystery, or generally less understood, than the singular strength of affection which binds the humble peasant of Irish life to his foster-brother, and more especially if the latter be a person of rank or consideration. This anomalous attachment, though it may to a certain extent be mutual, is nevertheless very seldom known to be equal in strength between the parties. Experience has sufficiently proved to us, that whilst instances of equality in feeling have been known to characterize it, the predominant power of its spirit has always been found to exist in the person of the humbler party. How to account for this would certainly require a more philosophical acquaintance with human nature than has fallen to our lot; we must therefore be content to know that the fact is precisely as we have stated it. Irish history and tradition furnishes us with sufficient materials on which to ground clear and distinct proofs that the attachment of habit and contiguity in these instances far transcends that of natural affection itself. It is very seldom that one brother will lay down his life for another, and yet instances of such high and heroic sacrifices have occurred in the case of the foster-brother, whose affection has thus not unfrequently triumphed over death itself. It is certainly impossible to impute this wild but indomitable attachment to the force of domestic feeling, because, while we maintain that the domestic affections in Ireland are cer-

tainly stronger than those of any other country in the world, still, instances of this inexplicable devotion have occurred in the persons of those in whom the domestic ties were known to be very feeble. It is true, there are many moral anomalies in the human heart with which we are as yet but imperfectly acquainted; and as they arise from some wayward and irregular combination of its impulses that operate independently of any known principle of action, it is not likely that we shall ever thoroughly understand them. There is another peculiarity in Irish feeling, which, as it is analogous to this, we cannot neglect to mention it. We allude to the *Parisheen*, a term which we must explain at further length to our readers. When the Dublin Foundling Hospital was in existence, the poor infants whom an unhappy destiny consigned to that gloomy and withering institution, were transmitted to different parts of the country, to be nursed by the wives of the lower classes of the peasantry—such as as day-labourers, cottiers, and small farmers, who cultivated from three to six or eight acres of land. These children were generally, indeed almost always called Parisheens—a word which could be properly applied only to such as, having no known parents, were supported by the parish in which they happen to be born. It was transferred to the Foundlings, however; although, with the exception of the metropolis, which certainly paid a parish tax for their maintenance, they were principally supported by a very moral act of parliament, which, by the wise provision of a large grant, held out a very liberal bounty to profligacy. At all events, the opprobrious epithet of Parisheen was that usually fixed upon them.

Now, of all classes of our fellow-creatures, one might almost naturally suppose that those deserted and forsaken beings would be apt, consigned as they uniformally were to the care of mercenary strangers, to experience neglect, ill-treatment, or even cruelty itself; and yet, honour be to the generous hearts and

affectionate feelings of our humble people, it has been proved, by the incontestible authority of a Commission expressly appointed to examine and report on the working of the very hospital in question, that the care, affection, and tenderness with which these ill-fated creatures were treated by the nurses to whom they were given out, were equal, if not superior to that bestowed upon their own children. Even when removed from these nurses to situations of incomparably more comfort—situations in which they were lodged, fed, and clothed, in a far superior manner—they have been known, in innumerable instances, to elope from their masters and mistresses, and return to their old abodes, preferring the indulgence of their affection, with poverty and distress, to any thing else that life could offer.

All this, however, was very natural and reasonable, for we know that even the domestic animal will love the hand that feeds him. But that which we have alluded to as constituting the strong analogy between it and the attachment of the foster-brother, is the well-known fact, that the affection of the children to the nurses, though strong and remarkable, was as nothing when compared with that which the nurses felt for them. This was proved by a force of testimony which no scepticism could encounter. The parting scenes between them were affecting, and in many instances agonizing, to the last degree. Nay, nurses have frequently come up to Dublin, and, with tears in their eyes, and in accents of the most unfeigned sorrow, begged that the orphans might be allowed to stay with them, undertaking, rather than part with them, that they would support them at their own expense. It would be very difficult to produce a more honourable testimony to the moral honesty, generosity, and exquisite kindness of heart which characterize our people, than the authentic facts we have just mentioned. They fell naturally in our way when treating of the subject which preceded them, and we could not, in justice to circum-

stances so beautiful and striking, much less in justice to the people themselves, pass them over in silence.

We shall now relate a short story, illustrating the attachment of a foster-brother; but as we have reason to believe that the circumstances are true, we shall introduce fictitious names instead of real ones.

The rebellion of ninety-eight was just at its height when the incidents we are about to mention took place. A gentleman named Moore had a daughter remarkable for her beauty and accomplishments. Indeed, so celebrated had she become, that her health was always drunk as the toast of her native county. Many suitors she had, of course, but among the rest two were remarkable for their assiduous attentions to her, and an intense anxiety to secure her affections. Henry Irwin was a high loyalist, as was her own father, whose consent to gain the affections of his daughter had been long given to his young friend. The other, a young gentleman named Hewson, who in point of fact had already secured her affections, was, unfortunately, deeply involved in, or, we should rather say, an open leader on, the insurgent side. His principles having become known to Moore, as republican, for some time before the breaking out of the insurrection, he was, in consequence, forbidden the house, and warned against holding communication with any member of his family. He had succeeded, however, before this, by the aid of Miss Moore herself, who was aware of his principles, in placing as butler in her father's family his own foster-brother, Frank Finnegan—an arrangement which never would have been permitted, had Moore known of the peculiar bond of affection which subsisted between them. Of this, however, he was ignorant; and in admitting Finnegan into his family, he was not aware of the advantages he afforded to the proscribed suitor of his daughter. This interdiction, however, came too late for the purposes of prudence. Ere it was issued, Hewson and his daughter had exchanged vows of mutual affection; but the national outbreak which

immediately ensued, by forcing Hewson to assume his place as an insurgent leader, appeared to have placed a barrier between him and her, which was naturally considered to be insurmountable. In the meantime, Moore himself, who was a local magistrate, and also a captain of yeomanry, took an extremely active part in quelling the insurrection, and in hunting down and securing the rebels. Nor was Irwin less zealous in following the footsteps of the man to whom he wished to recommend himself as his future son-in-law. They acted together; and so vigorous were the measures of the young loyalist, that the other felt it necessary in some instances to check the exuberance of his loyalty. This, however, was not known to the opposite party; for as Irwin always seemed to act under the instructions of his friend Moore, so was it obviously enough inferred that every harsh act and wanton stretch of authority which he committed, was either sanctioned or suggested by the other. The consequence was, that Moore became, if possible, more odious than Irwin, who was looked upon as a rash, hot-headed zealot; whilst the veteran was marked as a cool and wily old fox, who had ten times the cunning and cruelty of the senseless puppet he was managing. In this, it is unnecessary to say, they were egregiously mistaken.

In the meantime the rebellion went forward, and many acts of cruelty and atrocity were committed on both sides. Moore's house and family would have been attacked, and most probably murder and ruin might have visited him and his, were it not for the influence of Hewson with the rebels. Twice did the latter succeed, and on each occasion with great difficulty, in preventing him and his household from falling victims to the vengeance of the insurgents. Moore was a man of great personal courage, but apt to underrate the character and enterprize of those who were opposed to him. Indeed, his prudence was by no means on a par with his bravery or zeal, for he has often been known to sally out at the head of a party in quest of his enemies, and leave his own mansion,

and the lives of those who were in it, exposed and defenceless.

On one of those excursions it was that he chanced to capture a small body of the insurgents, headed by an intimate friend and distant relative of Hewson's. As the law at that unhappy period was necessarily quick in its operations, we need scarcely say, that, having been taken openly armed against the king and the constitution, they were tried and executed by the summary sentence of a court-martial. A deep and bloody vengeance was now sworn against him and his by the rebels, who for some time afterwards lay in wait for the purpose of retaliating in a spirit prompted by the atrocious character of the times.

Hewson's attachment to Moore's daughter, however, had been long known, and his previous interference on behalf of her father had been successful on that account only. Now, however, the plan of attack was laid without his cognizance, and that with the most solemn injunctions to every one concerned in it not to disclose their object to any human being not officially acquainted with it, much less to Hewson, who they calculated would once more take such steps as might defeat their sanguinary purpose. These arrangements having been made, matters were allowed to remain quiet for a little, until Moore should be off his guard; for we must observe here, that he had felt it necessary, after the execution of the captured rebels, to keep his house strongly and resolutely defended. The attack was therefore postponed until the apprehensions created by his recent activity should gradually wear away, and his enemies might with less risk undertake the work of bloodshed and destruction. The night at length was appointed on which the murderous attack must be made. All the dark details were arranged with a deliberation at which, removed as we now are from the sanguinary excitement of the times, the very soul shudders and gets sick. A secret, however, communicated, even under the most solemn sanction, to a great number, stands a great chance of

being no secret at all, especially during civil war, where so many interests of friendship, blood, and marriage, bind the opposing parties together, in spite of the public principles under which they act. Miss Moore's maid had a brother, for instance, who, together with several of his friends and relatives, being appointed to aid in the attack, felt anxious that she should not be present on that night, lest her acquaintance with them might be ultimately dangerous to the assailants. He accordingly sought an opportunity of seeing her, and in earnest language urged her to absent herself from her master's house on the appointed night. The girl was not much surprised at the ambiguity of his hints, for the truth was, that no person, man or woman, possessing common sense, could be ignorant of the state of the country, or of the evil odour in which Moore and Irwin, and all those who were active on the part of government, were held. She accordingly told him that she would follow his advice, and spoke to him in terms so shrewd and significant, that he deemed it useless to preserve further secrecy. The plot was thus disclosed, and the girl warned to leave the house, both for her own sake and for that of those who were to wreak their vengeance upon Moore and his family.

The poor girl, hoping that her master and the rest might fly from impending danger, communicated the circumstances to Miss Moore, who forthwith communicated them to her father, who, again, instead of flying, took measures to collect about his premises, during the early part of the dreaded night, a large and well-armed force from the next military station. Now, it so happened that this girl, whose name was Baxter, had a leaning towards Hewson's foster-brother Finnegan, her fellow-servant, who in plain language was her accepted lover. If love will not show itself in a case of danger, it is good for nothing. We need scarcely say that Peggy Baxter, apprehensive of danger to her sweetheart, confided the secret to him also in the early part of the day of attack. Finnegan was

surprised especially when he heard from Peggy that Hewson had been kept in ignorance of the whole design (for so her brother had told her), in consequence of his attachment to her young mistress. There was now no possible way of warding off such a calamity, unless by communicating with Hewson; and this, as Finnegan was a sound United Irishman, he knew he could do without any particular danger. He lost no time, therefore, in seeing him; and we need scarcely say that his foster-brother felt stunned and thunderstruck at the deed that was about to be perpetrated without his knowledge. Finnegan then left him, but ere he reached home, the darkness had set in, and on arriving, he sought the kitchen and its comforts, ignorant, as were indeed most of the servants, that the upper rooms, and out-houses were literally crammed with fierce and well-armed soldiers.

Matters were now coming to a crisis. Hewson, aware that there was little time to be lost, collected a small party of his own immediate and personal friends, not one of whom, from their known attachment to him, had been, any more than himself, admitted to a knowledge of the attack upon Moore. Determined, therefore, to be beforehand with the others, he and they met at an appointed place, from whence they went quickly, and with as much secrecy as possible, to Moore's house, for the purpose not only of apprizing him of the fate to which he and his were doomed, but also with an intention of escorting him and all his family as far from his house as might be consistent with the safety of both parties. Our readers are of course prepared for the surprise and capture of honest Hewson and his friends, of whose friendly intentions they are aware. It is too true. Not expecting to find the house defended, they were unprepared for an attack or sally; and the upshot was, that in a few minutes two of them were shot, and most of the rest, among whom was Hewson, taken prisoners on the spot. Those who escaped

communicated to the other insurgents an account of the strength with which Moore's house was defended; and the latter, instead of making an attempt to rescue their friends, abandoned the meditated attack altogether, and left Hewson and his party to their fate. A gloomy fate that was. Assertions and protestations of their innocence were all in vain. An insurgent party were expected to attack the house, and of course they came, headed by Hewson himself, who, as Moore said, no doubt intended to spare none of them but his daughter, and her only, in order that she might become a rebel's wife. Irwin, too, his rival in love and his foe in politics, was on the court-martial, and what had he to expect? Death; and nothing but the darkness of the night prevented his enemies from putting it into immediate execution upon him and his companions.

Hewson maintained a dignified silence; and upon seeing his friends guarded from the hall, where they were now assembled, into a large barn, he desired to be placed along with them.

"No," said Moore, "if you are a rebel ten times over, you are a gentleman; you must not herd with them; and besides, Mr. Hewson, with great respect to you, we shall place you in a much safer place. In the highest room, in a house unusually high, we shall lodge you, out of which if you escape, we will say you are an innocent man. Frank Finnegan, show him and those two soldiers up to the observatory; get him refreshments, and leave him in their charge. Guard his door, men, for you shall be held responsible for his appearance in the morning."

The men, in obedience to these orders, escorted him to the door, outside of which was their station for the night, When Frank and he entered the observatory, the former gently shut the door, and, turning to his foster-brother, exclaimed in accents of deep distress, but lowering his voice, "There is not a moment to be lost; you must escape."

"That is impossible," replied Hewson, "unless I had wings and could use them."

"We must try," returned Frank; "we can only fail—at the most they can only take your life, and that they'll do at all events."

"I know that," said Hewson, "and I am prepared for it."

"Hear me," said the other; "I will come up by and bye with refreshments, say in about half an hour; be you stripped when I come. We are both of a size; and as these fellows don't know either of us very well, I would't say but you may go out in my clothes. I'll hear nothing," he added, seeing Hewson about to speak; "I'm here too long, and these fellows might begin to suspect something. Be prepared when I come. Good bye, Mr. Hewson," he said aloud, as he opened the door; "in throth an' conscience I'm sorry to see you here, but that's the consequence of turnin' rebel against King George, an' glory to him—*soon and sudden*," he added in an undertone. "In about half an hour I'll bring you up some supper, sir. Keep a sharp eye on him," he whispered to the two soldiers, giving them at the same time a knowing and confidential wink; "these same rebels are like eels, an' will slip as aisily through your fingers—an' the devil's bitther one yez have in there;" and as he spoke, he pointed over his shoulder with his inverted thumb to the door of the observatory.

Much about the time he had promised to return, a crash was heard upon the stairs, and Finnegan's voice in a high key exclaiming, "The curse o' blazes on you for stairs, an' hell *presume* all the rebels in Europe, I pray heavens this night! There's my nose broke between you all!" He then stooped down, and in a torrent of bitter imprecations—all conveyed, however, in mock oaths—he collected and placed again upon the tray on which they had been, all the materials for Hewson's supper. He then ascended, and on presenting himself at the prisoner's door, the blood was copiously streaming from his nose. The soldiers—who by the way were yeomen——on seeing him, could not avoid laughing at his rueful appearance—a

circumstance which seemed to nettle him a good deal.

"Yez may laugh!" he exclaimed, "but I'd hould a wager I've shed more blood for his majesty this night than either of you ever did in your lives! May hell renounce all rebels any how!"

This only heightened their mirth, in the midst of which he entered Hewson's room; and ere the action could be deemed possible, they had exchanged clothes.

"Now," said he, "fly. Behind the garden Miss Moore is waitin' for you; she knows all. Take the bridle-road through the broad bog, an' get into Captain Corny's demesne. Take my advice, too, an' go both of you to America, if you can. But aisy. God forgive me for pullin' you by the nose instead of shakin' you by the hand, an' me may never see you more."

The poor fellow's voice became unsteady with emotion, although the smile at his own humour was upon his face at the time.

"As I came in with a bloody nose," he proceeded, giving that of Hewson a fresh pull, "you know you must go out with one. An' now God's blessin' be with you! Think of one who loved you as none else did."

The next morning there was uproar, tumult, and confusion in the house of the old loyalist magistrate, when it was discovered that his daughter and the butler were not forthcoming. But when, on examining the observatory, it was ascertained that Finnegan was safe and Hewson gone, no language can describe the rage and fury of Moore, Irwin, and the military in general. Our readers may anticipate what occurred. The noble fellow was brought to the drum-head, tried, and sentenced to be shot where he stood; but ere the sentence was put into execution, Moore addressed him. "Now, Finnegan," said he, "I will let you off, if you tell us where Hewson and my daughter are. I pledge my honour publicly that I'll save your life, and

get you a free pardon, if you enable us to trace and recover them."

"I don't know where they are," he replied, "but even if I did, I would not betray them."

"Think of what has been said to you," added Irwin. "I give you my pledge also to the same effect."

"Mr. Irwin," he replied, "I have but one word to say. When I did what I did, I knew very well that *my* life would go for *his;* an' I know that if he had thought so, he would be standin' now in my place. Put your sentence into execution; I'm prepared."

"Take five minutes," said Moore. "Give him up and live."

"Mr. Moore," said he, with a decision and energy which startled them all, "I AM HIS FOSTER-BROTHER."

This was felt to be sufficient; he stood at the appointed place, calm and unshrinking, and at the first discharge fell instantaneously dead.

Thus passed a spirit worthy of a place in a brighter page than that of our humble miscellany, and which, if the writer of this lives, shall be more adequately recorded.

Hewson, finding that the insurgent cause was becoming hopeless, escaped, after two or three other unsuccessful engagements, to America, instigated by the solicitation of his young wife. Old Moore died in a few years afterwards, but he survived his resentment, for he succeeded in reconciling the then government to his son-in-law, who returned to Ireland; and it was found by his will, much to the mortification of many of his relatives, that he had left the bulk of his property to Mrs. Hewson, who had always been his favourite child, and whose attachment to Hewson he had himself originally encouraged.

There are two records more connected with this transaction, with which we shall close. In a northern newspaper, dated some fifteen years afterwards, there occurs the following paragraph:—

"AFFAIR OF HONOUR—FATAL DUEL.—Yesterday morning, at the early hour of five o'clock, a duel was

fought between A. Irwin, Esq. and J. Hewson, Esq., of Mooredale, the former of whom, we regret to say, fell by the second fire. We hope the words attributed to one of the parties are not correctly reported. '*The blood of Frank Finnegan is now avenged.*'"

The other record is to be found in the churchyard of ——, where there is a handsome monument erected, with the following inscription :—

Sacred to the Memory
OF
FRANCIS FINNEGAN,
Whose Death presented an instance of the greatest Virtue
of which Human Nature is capable—
That of laying down his Life for his Friend.

This Monument is erected to his Memory, by
JAMES HEWSON,
His Friend and Foster-Brother,
To save whose more unworthy life, he nobly sacrificed his own.

THE THREE WISHES.

AN IRISH LEGEND.

In ancient times there lived a man called Billy Dawson, and he was known to be a great rogue. They say he was descended from the family of the Dawsons, which was the reason, I suppose, of his carrying their name upon him.

Billy, in his youthful days, was the best hand at doing nothing in all Europe; devil a mortal could come next or near him at idleness; and, in consequence of his great practice that way, you may be sure that if any man could make a fortune by it he would have done it.

Billy was the only son of his father, barring two daughters; but they have nothing to do with the story I'm telling you. Indeed it was kind father and grandfather for Billy to be handy at the knavery as well as at the idleness; for it was well known that not one of their blood ever did an honest act, except with a roguish intention. In short, they were altogether a *dacent* connexion, and a credit to the name. As for Billy, all the villany of the family, both plain and ornamental, came down to him by way of legacy; for it so happened that the father, in spite of all his cleverness, had nothing but his roguery to *lave* him.

Billy, to do him justice, improved the fortune he got: every day advanced him farther into dishonesty and poverty, until, at the long run, he was acknowledged on all hands to be the completest swindler and the poorest vagabond in the whole parish.

Billy's father, in his young days, had often been forced to acknowledge the inconvenience of not having a trade, in consequence of some nice point in law, called the "Vagrant Act," that sometimes

troubled him. On this account he made up his mind to give Bill an occupation, and he accordingly bound him to a blacksmith; but whether Bill was to *live* or *die* by *forgery* was a puzzle to his father,—though the neighbours said that *both* was most likely. At all events, he was put apprentice to a smith for seven years, and a hard card his master had to play in managing him. He took the proper method, however, for Bill was so lazy and roguish that it would vex a saint to keep him in order.

"Bill," says his master to him one day that he had been sunning himself about the ditches, instead of minding his business, "Bill, my boy, I'm vexed to the heart to see you in such a bad state of health. You're very ill with that complaint called an *All-overness;* however," says, he, "I think I can cure you. Nothing will bring you about but three or four sound doses, every day, of a medicine called "the oil o' the hazel.' Take the first dose now" says he; and he immediately banged him, with a hazel cudgel until Bill's bones ached for a week afterwards.

"If you were my son," said his master, "I tell you, that, as long as I could get a piece of advice growing convenient in the hedges, I'd have you a different youth from what you are. If working was a sin, Bill, not an innocenter boy ever broke bread than you would be. Good people's scarce you think; but however that may be, I throw it out as a hint, that you must take you're medicine till you're cured, whenever you happen to get unwell in the same way."

From this out he kept Bill's nose to the grindingstone, and whenever his complaint returned, he never failed to give him a hearty dose for his improvement.

In the course of time, however, Bill was his own man and his own master; but it would puzzle a saint to know whether the master or the man was the more precious youth in the eyes of the world.

He immediately married a wife, and devil a doubt of it, but if *he* kept *her* in whiskey and sugar, *she* kept *him* in hot water. Bill drank and she drank;

Bill fought and she fought; Bill was idle and she was idle; Bill whacked her and she whacked Bill. If Bill gave her one black eye, she gave him another; *just to keep herself in countenance.* Never was there a blessed pair so well met; and a beautiful sight it was to see them both at breakfast-time blinking at each other across the potato-basket, Bill with his right eye black, and she with her left.

In short, they were the talk of the whole town: and to see Bill of a morning staggering home drunk, his shirt sleeves rolled up on his smutted arms, his breast open, and an old tattered leather apron, with one corner tucked up under his belt, singing one minute, and fighting with his wife the next;—she, reeling beside him, with a discoloured eye, as aforesaid, a dirty ragged cap on one side of her head, a pair of Bill's old slippers on her feet, a squalling child on her arm,—now cuffing and dragging Bill, and again kissing and hugging him! yes it was a pleasant picture to see this loving pair in such a state!

This might do for a while, but it could not last. They were idle, drunken, and ill-conducted; and it was not to be supposed that they would get a farthing candle on their words. They were of course *dhruv* to great straits; and faith, they soon found that their fighting, and drinking, and idleness made them the laughing-sport of the neighbours; but neither brought food to their *childhre*, put a coat upon their backs, nor satisfied their landlord when he came to look for his own. Still the never a one of Bill but was a funny fellow with strangers, though, as we said, the greatest rogue unhanged.

One day he was standing against his own anvil, completely in a brown study,—being brought to his wit's end how to make out a breakfast for the family. The wife was scolding and cursing in the house, and the naked creatures of childhre squalling about her knees for food. Bill was fairly at an amplush, and knew not where or how to turn himself, when a poor withered old beggar came into the forge, tottering on

his staff. A long white beard fell from his chin, and he looked so thin and hungry that you might blow him, one would think, over the house. Bill at this moment had been brought to his senses by distress, and his heart had a touch of pity towards the old man; for, on looking at him a second time, he clearly saw starvation and sorrow in his face.

"God save you, honest man!" said Bill.

The old man gave a sigh, and raising himself with great pain, on his staff, he looked at Bill in a very beseeching way.

"Musha, God save you kindly!" says he; "maybe you could give a poor, hungry, helpless ould man a mouthful of something to ait? You see yourself I'm not able to work; if I was, I'd scorn to be behoulding to any one."

"Faith, honest man," said Bill, "if you knew who you're speaking to, you'd as soon ask a monkey for a churn-staff as me for either mate or money. There's not a blackguard in the three kingdoms so fairly on the *shaughran* as I am for both the one and the other. The wife within is sending the curses thick and heavy on me, and the childhre's playing the cat's melody to keep her in comfort. Take my word for it, poor man, if I had either mate or money I'd help you, for I know particularly well what it is to want them at the present spaking; an empty sack won't stand, neighbour."

So far Bill told him truth. The good thought was in his heart, because he found himself on a footing with the beggar; and nothing brings down pride, or softens the heart, like feeling what it is to want.

"Why you are in a worse state than I am," said the old man; "you have a family to provide for, and I have only myself to support."

"You may kiss the book on that, my old worthy," replied Bill; "but come, what I can do for you I will; plant yourself up here beside the fire, and I'll give it a blast or two of my bellows that will warm the old blood in your body. It's a cold, miserable, snowy day, and a good heat will be of service."

"Thank you kindly," said the old man; "I *am* cold, and a warming at your fire will do me good, sure enough. Oh, it *is* a bitter, bitter day, God bless it!"

He then sat down, and Bill blew a rousing blast that soon made the stranger edge back from the heat. In a short time he felt quite comfortable, and when the numbness was taken out of his joints, he buttoned himself up and prepared to depart.

"Now," says he to Bill, "you hadn't the food to give me, but *what you could you did.* Ask any three wishes you choose, and be they what they may, take my word for it, they shall be granted."

Now, the truth is, that Bill, though he believed himself a great man in point of 'cuteness, wanted, after all, a full quarter of being square; for there is always a great difference between a wise man and a knave. Bill was so much of a rogue that he could not, for the blood of him, ask an honest wish, but stood scratching his head in a puzzle.

"Three wishes!" said he. "Why, let me see—did you say *three?*"

"Ay," replied the stranger, "three wishes—that was what I said."

"Well," said Bill, "here goes,—aha!—let me alone, my old worthy!—faith I'll over-reach the parish, if what you say is true. I'll cheat them in dozens, rich and poor, old and young: let me alone, man,—I have it here;" and he tapped his forehead with great glee. "Faith, you're the sort to meet of a frosty morning, when a man wants his breakfast; and I'm sorry that I have neither money nor credit to get a bottle of whiskey, that we might take our *morning* together."

"Well, but let us hear the wishes," said the old man; "my time is short, and I cannot stay much longer."

"Do you see this sledge hammer?" said Bill; "I wish, in the first place, that whoever takes it up in their hands may never be able to lay it down till I give them lave; and that whoever begins to sledge

with it may never stop sledging till it's my pleasure to release him."

"Secondly—I have an arm-chair, and I wish that whoever sits down in it may never rise out of it till they have my consent."

"And thirdly—that whatever money I put into my purse, nobody may have power to take it out of it but myself!"

"You devil's rip!" says the old man in a passion, shaking his staff across Bill's nose, "why did you not ask something that would sarve you both here and hereafter? Sure it's as common as the market-cross, that there's not a vagabone in his Majesty's dominions stands more in need of both."

"Oh! by the elevens," said Bill, "I forgot that altogether! Maybe you'd be civil enough to let me change one of them? The sorra purtier wish ever was made than I'll make, if you'll give me another chance."

"Get out, you reprobate," said the old fellow, still in a passion. "Your day of grace is past. Little you knew who was speaking to you all this time. I'm St. Moroky, you blackguard, and I gave you an opportunity of doing something for yourself and your family; but you neglected it, and now your fate is cast, you dirty, bog-trotting profligate. Sure it's well known what you are! Aren't you a byword in every body's mouth, you and your scold of a wife? By this and by that, if ever you happen to come across me again, I'll send you to where you won't freeze, you villain!"

He then gave Bill a rap of his cudgel over the head, and laid him at his length beside the bellows, kicked a broken coal-scuttle out of his way, and left the forge in a fury.

When Billy recovered himself from the effects of the blow, and began to think on what had happened, he could have quartered himself with vexation for not asking great wealth as one of the wishes at least; but now the die was cast on him, and he could only make the most of the three he pitched upon.

He now bethought him how he might turn them to

the best account, and here his cunning came to his aid. He began by sending for his wealthiest neighbours on pretence of business; and when he got them under his roof, he offered them the arm-chair to sit down in. He now had them safe, nor could all the art of man relieve them except worthy Bill was willing. Bill's plan was to make the best bargain he could before he released his prisoners; and let him alone for knowing how to make their purses bleed. There wasn't a wealthy man in the country he did not fleece. The parson of the parish bled heavily; so did the lawyer; and a rich attorney, who had retired from practice, swore that the court of Chancery itself was paradise compared to Bill's chair.

This was all very good for a time. The fame of his chair, however, soon spread; so did that of his sledge. In a short time neither man, woman, nor child, would darken his door; all avoided him and his fixtures as they would a spring-gun or man-trap. Bill, so long as he fleeced his neighbours, never wrought a hand's turn; so that when his money was out, he found himself as badly off as ever. In addition to all this, his character was fifty times worse than before; for it was the general belief that he had dealings with the old boy. Nothing now could exceed his misery, distress, and ill temper. The wife and he and their children all fought among one another. Every body hated them, cursed them, and avoided them. The people thought they were acquainted with more than Christian people ought to know. This, of course, came to Bill's ears, and it vexed him very much.

One day he was walking about the fields, thinking of how he could raise the wind once more; the day was dark, and he found himself, before he stopped, in the bottom of a lonely glen covered by great bushes that grew on each side. "Well," thought he, when every other means of raising money failed him, "it's reported that I'm in league with the old-boy, and as it's a folly to have the name of the connexion without the profit, I'm ready to make a bargain with him any day;—so," said he, raising his voice, "Nick, you

sinner, if you be convanient and willing, why stand out here; show your best leg,—here's your man."

The words were hardly out of his mouth, when a dark sober-looking old gentleman, not unlike a lawyer, walked up to him. Bill looked at the foot and saw the hoof.—"Morrow, Nick," says Bill.

"Morrow, Bill," says Nick. "Well, Bill, what's the news?"

"Devil a much myself hears of late," says Bill, "is there any thing *fresh* below?"

"I can't exactly say, Bill; I spend little of my time down now; the Tories are in office, and my hands are consequently too full of business here to pay much attention to any thing else."

"A fine place this, sir," says Bill, "to take a constitutional walk in; when I want an appetite I often come this way myself,—hem! *High* feeding is very bad without exercise."

"High feeding! Come, come, Bill, you know you did'nt taste a morsel these four-and-twenty hours."

"You know that's a bounce, Nick. I eat a breakfast this morning that would put a stone of flesh on you, if you only smelt at it."

"No matter; this is not to the purpose. What's that you were muttering to yourself awhile ago? If you want to come to the brunt, here I'm for you."

"Nick," said Bill, "you're complate; you want nothing barring a pair of Brian O'Lynn's breeches."

Bill, in fact, was bent on making his companion open the bargain, because he had often heard, that in that case, with proper care on his own part, he might defeat him in the long run. The other, however, was his match.

"What was the nature of Brian's garment," inquired Nick.—"Why, you know the song," said Bill—

> "Brian O'Lynn had no breeches to wear,
> So he got a sheep's skin for to make him a pair;
> With the fleshy side out and the woolly side in,
> They'll be pleasant and *cool*, says Brian O'Lynn.

A *cool* pare would sarve you, Nick."

"You're mighty waggish to-day, misther Dawson."

"And good right I have," said Bill; "I'm a man snug and well to do in the world; have lots of money, plenty of good eating and drinking, and what more need a man wish for?"

"True," said the other; "in the meantime it's rather odd that so respectable a man should not have six inches of unbroken cloth in his apparel. You are as naked a tatter-demallion as I ever laid my eyes on; in full dress for a party of scare-crows, William."

"That's my own fancy, Nick; I don't work at my trade like a gentleman. This is my forge dress, you know."

"Well, but what did you summon me here for?" said the other; "you may as well speak out I tell you; for, my good friend, unless *you* do *I* shan't. Smell that."

"I smell more than that," said Bill; "and by the way, I'll thank you to give me the windy side of you—curse all sulphur I say. There, that's what I call an improvement in my condition. But as you *are* so stiff," says Bill, "why, the short and the long of it is—that—hem—you see I'm—tut—sure you know I have a thriving trade of my own, and that if I like I needn't be at a loss; but in the manetime I'm rather in a kind of a so—so—don't you *take*?"

And Bill winked knowingly, hoping to trick him into the first proposal.

"You must speak above-board, my friend," says the other;

"I'm a man of few words, blunt and honest. If you have anything to say, be plain. Don't think I can be losing my time with such a pitiful rascal as you are."

"Well," says Bill, "I want money, then, and am ready to come into terms. What have you to say to that, Nick?"

"Let me see—let me look at you," says his companion, turning him about. "Now, Bill, in the first place, are you not as finished a scare-crow as ever stood upon two legs?"

"I play second fiddle to you there again," says Bill.

"There you stand with the blackguards' coat of arms quartered under your eye, and—"

"Don't make little of *black*guards," said Bill, "nor spake disparagingly of *your own* crest."

"Why, what would you bring, you brazen rascal, if you were fairly put up at auction?"

"Faith, I'd bring more bidders than you would," said Bill, "if you were to go off at auction to-morrow. I tell you they should bid *downwards* to come to your value, Nicholas. We have no coin *small* enough to purchase you."

"Well, no matter," said Nick, "If you are willing to be mine at the expiration of seven years, I will give you more money than ever the rascally breed of you was worth."

"Done!" said Bill; "but no disparagement to my family, in the meantime; so down with the hard cash, and don't be a *neger*."

The money was accordingly paid down! but as nobody was present, except the giver and receiver, the amount of what Bill got was never known.

"Won't you give me a luck-penny?" said the old gentleman.

"Tut," said Billy, "so prosperous an old fellow as you cannot want it; however, bad luck to you, with all my heart! and it's rubbing grease to a fat pig to say so. Be off now, or I'll commit suicide on you. Your absence is a cordial to most people, you infernal old profligate. You have injured my morals even for the short time you have been with me; for I don't find myself so virtuous as I was."

"Is that your gratitude, Billy?"

"Is it gratitude *you* speak of, man? I wonder you don't blush when you name it. However, when you come again, if you bring a third eye in your head you will see what I mane, Nicholas, ahagur."

The old gentleman, as Bill spoke, hopped across the ditch, on his way to *Downing*-street, where of late 'tis thought he possesses much influence.

Bill now began by degrees to show off; but still wrought a little at his trade to blindfold the neighbours. In a very short time, however, he became a great man. So long indeed as he was a *poor* rascal, no decent person would speak to him; even the proud serving-men at the "Big House" would turn up their noses at him. And he well deserved to be made little of by others, because he was mean enough to make little of himself. But when it was seen and known that he had oceans of money, it was wonderful to think, although he was *now* a greater blackguard than ever, how those who despised him before, began to come round him and court his company. Bill, however, had neither sense nor spirit to make those sunshiny friends know their distance; not he —instead of that he was proud to be seen in decent company, and so long as the money lasted, it was, "hail fellow well met," between himself and every fair-faced *spunger* who had a horse under him, a decent coat to his back, and a good appetite to eat his dinners. With riches and all, Bill was the same man still; but, somehow or other, there is a great difference between a rich profligate and a poor one, and Bill found it so to his cost in *both* cases.

Before half the seven years was passed, Bill had his carriage, and his equipages; was hand and glove with my Lord This, and my Lord That; kept hounds and hunters; was the first sportsman at the Curragh; patronized every boxing ruffian he could pick up; and betted night and day on cards, dice, and horses. Bill, in short, *should* be a blood, and except he did all this, he could not presume to mingle with the fashionable bloods of his time.

It's an old proverb, however, that "what is got over the devil's back is sure to go off under it; and in Bill's case this proved true. In short, the old boy himself could not supply him with money so fast as he made it fly; it was "come easy, go easy," with Bill, and so sign was on it, before he came within two years of his time he found his purse empty.

And now came the value of his summer friends to

be known. When it was discovered that the cash was no longer flush with him—that stud, and carriage, and hounds were going to the hammer—whish! off they went, friends, relations, pot-companions, dinner-eaters, black-legs and all, like a flock of crows that had smelt gunpowder. Down Bill soon went, week after week, and day after day, until at last, he was obliged to put on the leather apron and take to the hammer again; and not only that, for as no experience could make him wise, he once more began his tap-room brawls, his quarrels with Judy, and took to his "high feeding" at the dry potatoes and salt. Now, too, came the cutting tongues of all who knew him, like razors upon him. Those that he scorned because they were poor and himself rich, now paid him back his own with interest; and those that he measured himself with, because they were rich, and who only countenanced him in consequence of his wealth, gave him the hardest word in their cheeks. The devil mend him! He deserved it all, and more if he had got it.

Bill, however, who was a hardened sinner, never fretted himself down an ounce of flesh by what was said to him, or of him. Not he; he cursed, and fought, and swore, and schemed away as usual, taking in every one he could; and surely none could match him at villany of all sorts and sizes.

At last the seven years became expired, and Bill was one morning sitting in his forge, sober and hungry, the wife cursing him, and the childhre squaling, as before; he was thinking how he might defraud some honest neighbour out of a breakfast to stop their mouths and his own too, when who walks in to him but old Nick, to demand his bargain.

"Morrow, Bill!" says he with a sneer.

"The devil welcome you!" says Bill; "but you have a fresh memory."

"A bargain's a bargain between two *honest* men, any day," says Satan; "when I speak of *honest* men, I mean *yourself* and *me*, Bill;" and he put his tongue in his cheek to make game of the unfortunate rogue he had come for.

"Nick, my worthy fellow," said Bill, "have bowels; you wouldn't do a shabby thing; you wouldn't disgrace your own character by putting more weight upon a falling man. You know what it is to get a *come down* yourself, my worthy; so just keep your toe in your pump, and walk off with yourself somewhere else. A *cool* walk will sarve you better than my company, Nicholas."

"Bill, it's no use in shirking;" said his friend, "your swindling tricks may enable you to cheat others, but you won't cheat *me*, I guess. You want nothing to make you perfect in your way but to travel; and travel you shall under my guidance, Billy. No, no—*I'm* not to be swindled my good fellow. I have rather a—a—better opinion of myself, Mr. D. than to think that you could outwit one Nicholas Clutie, Esq.—ehem!"

"You may sneer, you sinner," replied Bill; "but I tell you that I have outwitted men who could buy and sell you to your face. Despair, you villain, when I tell you that *no attorney* could stand before me."

Satan's countenance got blank when he heard this; he wriggled and fidgetted about, and appeared to be not quite comfortable.

"In that case, then," says he, "the sooner I *deceive* you the better; so turn out for the *Low Countries*."

"Is it come to that in earnest?" said Bill, "and are you going to act the rascal at the long run?"

"'Pon honour, Bill."

"Have patience, then, you sinner, till I finish this horse-shoe—it's the last of a set I'm finishing for one of your friend the attorney's horses. And here, Nick, I hate idleness, you know it's the mother of mischief, take this sledge-hammer, and give a dozen strokes or so, till I get it out of hands, and then here's with you, since it must be so."

He then gave the bellows a puff that blew half a peck of dust in Club-foot's face, whipped out the red-hot iron, and set Satan sledging away for the bare life.

"Faith," says Bill to him, when the shoe was finished, "it's a thousand pities ever the sledge should

be out of your hand; the great *Parra Gow* was a child to you at sledging, you're such an able tyke. Now just exercise yourself till I bid the wife and childhre good-bye, and then I'm off."

Out went Bill, of course, without the slightest notion of coming back; no more than Nick had that he could not give up the sledging, and indeed neither could he, but was forced to work away as if he was sledging for a wager. This was just what Bill wanted. He was now compelled to sledge on until it was Bill's pleasure to release him; and so we leave him very industriously employed, while we look after the worthy who outwitted him.

In the meantime, Bill broke cover, and took to the country at large; wrought a little journey-work wherever he could get it, and in this way went from one place to another, till, in the course of a month, he walked back very coolly into his own forge, to see how things went on in his absence. There he found Satan in a rage, the perspiration pouring from him in torrents, hammering with might and main upon the naked anvil. Bill calmly leaned his back against the wall, placed his hat upon the side of his head, put his hands into his breeches pockets, and began to whistle *Shaun Gow's* hornpipe. At length he says in a very quiet and good-humoured way—

"Morrow, Nick!"

"Oh!" says Nick, still hammering away—"Oh! you double-distilled villain (hech!), may the most refined, ornamental (hech!), double-rectified, super-extra, and original (hech!) collection of curses that ever was gathered (hech!) into a single nosegay of ill fortune (hech!), shine in the button-hole of your conscience (hech!) while your name is Bill Dawson! I denounce you (hech!) as a double-milled villain, a finished, hot-pressed knave (hech!), in comparison of whom all the other knaves I ever knew (hech!), attorneys included, are honest men. I brand you (hech!) as the pearl of cheats, a tip-top take-in (hech!) I denounce you, I say again, for the villanous treatment (hech!) I have received at your hands in

this most untoward (hech!) and unfortunate transaction between us; for (hech!) unfortunate, in every sense, is he that has anything to do with (hech!) such a prime and finished impostor."

"You're very warm, Nicky," says Bill; "what puts you into a passion, you old sinner? Sure if it's your own will and pleasure to take exercise at my anvil, *I'm* not to be abused for it. Upon my credit, Nicky, you ought to blush for using such blackguard language, so unbecoming your grave character. You cannot say that it was I set you a hammering at the empty anvil, you profligate. However, as you are so industrious, I simply say it would be a thousand pities to take you from it. Nick, I love industry in my heart, and I always encourage it; so work away, it's not often you spend your time so creditably. I'm afraid if you weren't at that you'd be worse employed."

"Bill, have bowels," said the operative; "you wouldn't go to lay more weight on a falling man, you know; you wouldn't disgrace your character by such a piece of iniquity as keeping an inoffensive gentleman, advanced in years, at such an unbecoming and rascally job as this. Generosity's your top virtue, Bill; not but that you have many other excellent ones, as well as that, among which, as you say yourself, I reckon industry; but still it is in generosity you *shine*. Come, Bill, honour bright, and release me."

"Name the terms, you profligate."

"You're above terms, William; a generous fellow like you never thinks of terms."

"Good bye, old gentleman!" said Bill, very coolly; "I'll drop in to see you once a month."

"No, no, Bill, you infern—a—a— you excellent, worthy, delightful fellow, not so fast; not so fast. Come, name your terms, you sland— my dear Bill, name your terms."

"Seven years more."

"I agree; but ——"

"And the same supply of cash as before, down on the nail here."

"Very good; very good. You're rather simple,

Bill; rather soft, I must confess. Well, no matter. I shall yet turn the tab—a—hem? You are an exceedingly simple fellow, Bill; still there will come a day, my *dear* Bill—there will come ——"

"Do you grumble, you vagrant? Another word, and I double the terms."

"Mum, William—mum; *tace* is Latin for a candle."

"Seven years more of grace, and the same measure of the needful that I got before. Ay or no?"

"Of grace, Bill! Ay! ay! ay! There's the cash. I accept the terms. Oh blood! the rascal—of grace!! Bill!"

"Well, now drop the hammer, and vanish," says Billy; "but what would you think to take this sledge, while you stay, and give me a —— eh! why in such a hurry?" he added, seeing that Satan withdrew in double quick time.

"Hollo! Nicholas!" he shouted, "come back; you forgot something!" and when the old gentleman looked behind him, Billy shook the hammer at him, on which he vanished altogether.

Billy now got into his old courses; and what shows the kind of people the world is made of, he also took up with his old company. When they saw that he had the money once more, and was sowing it about him in all directions, they immediately began to find excuses for his former extravagance.

"Say what you will," said one, "Bill Dawson's a spirited fellow, and bleeds like a prince."

"He's a hospitable man in his own house, or out of it, as ever lived," said another.

"His only fault is," observed a third, "that he is, if anything, too generous, and doesn't know the value of money; his fault's on the right side, however."

He has the spunk in him," said a fourth; "keeps a capital table, prime wines, and a standing welcome for his friends."

"Why," said a fifth, "if he doesn't enjoy his money while he lives, he won't when he's dead; so more power to him, and a wider throat to his purse."

Indeed, the very persons who were cramming them-

selves at his expense despised him at heart. They knew very well, however, how to take him on the weak side. Praise his generosity, and he would do anything; call him a man of spirit, and you might fleece him to his face. Sometimes he would toss a purse of guineas to this knave, another to that flatterer, a third to a bully, and a fourth to some broken down rake—and all to convince them that *he* was a sterling friend—a man of mettle and liberality. But never was he known to help a virtuous and struggling family—to assist the widow or the fatherless, or to do any other act that was *truly* useful. It is to be supposed the reason of this was, that as he spent it, as most of the world do, in the service of the devil, by whose aid he got it, he was prevented from turning it to a good account. Between you and me, dear reader, there are more persons acting after Bill's fashion in the same world than you dream about.

When his money was out again, his friends played him the same rascally game once more. No sooner did his poverty become plain, than the knaves began to be troubled with small fits of modesty, such as an unwillingness to come to his place when there was no longer any thing to be got there. A kind of virgin bashfulness prevented them from speaking to him when they saw him getting out on the wrong side of his clothes. Many of them would turn away from him in the prettiest and most delicate manner when they thought he wanted to borrow money from them—all for fear of putting him to the blush by asking it. Others again, when they saw him coming towards their houses about dinner hour, would become so confused, from mere gratitude, as to think themselves in another place; and their servants, seized as it were, with the same feeling, would tell Bill that their masters were "not at home."

At length, after travelling the same villanous round as before, Bill was compelled to betake himself, as the last remedy, to the forge; in other words, he found that there is, after all, nothing in this world that a man can rely on so firmly and surely as his own industry.

Bill, however, wanted the organ of common sense ; for his experience—and it was sharp enough to leave an impression—ran off him like water off a duck.

He took to his employment sorely against his grain ; but he had now no choice. He must either work or starve, and starvation is like a great doctor, nobody tries it till every other remedy fails them. Bill had been twice rich ; twice a gentleman among blackguards, but always a blackguard among gentlemen ; for no wealth or acquaintance with decent society could rub the rust of his native vulgarity off him. He was now a common blinking sot in his forge ; a drunken bully in the tap-room, cursing and brow-beating every one as well as his wife ; boasting of how much money he had spent in his day ; swaggering about the high doings he carried on ; telling stories about himself and Lord This at the Curragh ; the dinners he gave—how much they cost him, and attempting to extort credit upon the strength of his former wealth. He was too ignorant, however, to know that he was publishing his own disgrace, and that it was a mean-spirited thing to be proud of what ought to make him blush through a deal board nine inches thick.

He was one morning industriously engaged in a quarrel with his wife, who, with a three-legged stool in her hand, appeared to mistake his head for his own anvil ; he, in the meantime, paid his addresses to her with his leather apron, when who steps in to jog his memory about the little agreement that was between them, but old Nick. The wife, it seems, in spite of all her exertions to the contrary, was getting the worst of it ; and Sir Nicholas, willing to appear a gentleman of great gallantry, thought he could not do less than take up the lady's quarrel, particularly as Bill had laid her in a sleeping posture. Now Satan thought this too bad ; and as he felt himself under many obligations to the sex, he determined to defend one of them on the present occasion ; so as Judy rose, he turned upon the husband, and floored him by a clever facer.

"You unmanly villain," said he, "is this the way

you treat your wife? 'Pon honour, Bill, I'll chastise you on the spot. I could not stand by, a spectator of such ungentlemanly conduct without giving up all claim to gallant——" Whack! the word was divided in his mouth by the blow of a churn-staff from Judy, who no sooner saw Bill struck, than she nailed Satan, who "fell" once more.

"What, you villain! that's for striking my husband like a murderer behind his back," said Judy, and she suited the action to the word, "that's for interfering between man and wife. Would you murder the poor man before my face? eh? If *he* bates me, you shabby dog you, who has a better right? I'm sure its nothing out of your pocket. Must you have your finger in every pie?"

This was anything but *idle* talk; for at every word she gave him a remembrance, hot and heavy. Nicholas backed, danced, and hopped; she advanced, still drubbing him with great perseverance, till at length he fell into the redoubtable arm chair, which stood exactly behind him. Bill, who had been putting in two blows for Judy's one, seeing that his enemy was safe, now got between the devil and his wife, *a situation that few will be disposed to envy him.*

"Tenderness, Judy," said the husband, "I hate cruelty. Go put the tongs in the fire, and make them red hot. Nicholas, you have a nose," said he.

Satan began to rise, but was rather surprised to find that he could not budge.

"Nicholas," says Bill, "how is your pulse? you don't look well; that is to say, you look worse than usual."

The other attempted to rise, but found it a mistake.

"I'll thank you to come along," said Bill, "I have a fancy to travel under your guidance, and we'll take the *Low Countries* in our way, won't we? Get to your legs, you sinner; you know a bargain's a bargain between two *honest men*, Nicholas; meaning *yourself* and *me*. Judy, are the tongs hot?"

Satan's face was worth looking at, as he turned his eyes from the husband to the wife, and then fastened them on the tongs, now nearly at a furnace heat in the

fire, conscious at the same time that he could not move out of the chair.

"Billy," said he, "you won't forget that I rewarded your generosity the last time I saw you, in the way of business."—"Faith, Nicholas, it fails me to remember any generosity I ever showed you. Don't be womanish. I simply want to see what kind of stuff your nose is made of, and whether it will stretch like a rogue's conscience. If it does, we will flatter it up the *chimly* with the red hot tongs, and when this old hat is fixed on the top of it, let us alone for a weather-cock."—"Have a *fellow-feeling*, Mr. Dawson; you know *we* ought not to dispute. Drop the matter, and I give you the next seven years."—"We know all that," says Billy, opening the red hot tongs very coolly."—"Mr. Dawson," said Satan, "if you cannot remember my friendship to yourself, don't forget how often I stood your father's friend, your grandfather's friend, and the friend of all your relations up to the tenth generation. I intended, also, to stand by your children after you, so long as the name of Dawson, and a respectable one it is, might last."—"Don't be blushing, Nick," says Bill, "you are too modest; that was ever your failing; hould up your head, there's money bid for you. I'll give you such a nose, my good friend, that you will have to keep an outrider before you, to carry the end of it on his shoulder."—"Mr. Dawson, I pledge my honour to raise your children in the world as high as they can go; no matter whether they desire it or not."—"That's very kind of you," says the other, "and I'll do as much for your nose."

He gripped it as he spoke, and the old boy immediately sung out; Bill pulled, and the nose went with him like a piece of warm wax. He then transferred the tongs to Judy, got a ladder, resumed the tongs, ascended the chimney, and tugged stoutly at the nose until he got it five feet above the roof.—He then fixed the hat upon the top of it, and came down.

"There's a weather-cock," said Billy; "I defy Ireland to show such a beauty. Faith, Nick, it would

make the purtiest steeple for a church, in all Europe, and the old hat fits it to a shaving."

In this state, with his nose twisted up the chimney, Satan sat for some time, experiencing the novelty of what might be termed a peculiar sensation. At last the worthy husband and wife began to relent :

"I think," said Bill, "that we have made the most of the nose, as well as the joke ; I believe, Judy, it's long enough."—"What is?" says Judy.

"Why, the joke," said the husband.

"Faith, and I think so is the nose," said Judy.

"What do you say yourself, Satan?" said Bill. "Nothing at all, William," said the other ; "but that—ha! ha!—it's a good joke—an excellent joke, and a goodly nose, too, as it *stands*. You were always a gentlemanly man, Bill, and did things with a grace ; still, if I might give an opinion on such a trifle—"

"It's no trifle at all," says Bill, "if you spake of the nose."—"Very well, it is not," says the other ; "still, I am decidedly of opinion, that if you could shorten both the joke and the nose without further violence, you would lay me under very heavy obligations, which I shall be ready to acknowledge and *repay* as I ought."—"Come," said Bill, "shell out once more, and be off for seven years. As much as you came down with the last time, and vanish."

The words were scarcely spoken, when the money was at his feet, and Satan invisible. Nothing could surpass the mirth of Bill and his wife at the result of this adventure. They laughed till they fell down on the floor.

It is useless to go over the same ground again. Bill was still incorrigible. The money went as the devil's money always goes. Bill caroused and squandered, but could never turn a penny of it to a good purpose. In this way, year after year went, till the seventh was closed, and Bill's hour come. He was now, and had been for some time past, as miserable a knave as ever. Not a shilling had he, nor a shilling's worth, with the exception of his forge, his cabin, and a few articles of crazy furniture. In this state he was

standing in his forge as before, straining his ingenuity how to make out a breakfast, when Satan came to look after him. The old gentleman was sorely puzzled how to get at him. He kept skulking and sneaking about the forge for some time, till he saw that Bill hadn't a cross to bless himself with. He immediately changed himself into a guinea, and lay in an open place where he knew Bill would see him. "If," said he, "I get once into his possession, I can manage him.' The honest smith took the bait, for it was well gilded, he clutched the guinea, put it into his purse, and closed it up. "Ho! ho!" shouted the devil out of the purse, "you're caught, Bill; I've secured you at last, you knave you. Why don't you despair, you villain, when you think of what's before you."—"Why, you unlucky ould dog," said Bill, "is it there you are? will you always drive your head into every loop-hole that's set for you? Faith, Nick achora, I never had you bagged till now."

Satan then began to tug and struggle with a view of getting out of the purse, but in vain.

"Mr. Dawson," said he, "we understand each other. I'll give the seven years additional, and the cash on the nail." "Be aisey, Nicholas. You know the weight of the hammer, that's enough. It's not a whipping with feathers you're going to get, anyhow. Just be aisey." "Mr. Dawson, I grant I'm not your match. Release me, and I double the cash. I was merely trying your temper when I took the shape of a guinea."

"Faith and I'll try your's before you lave it, I've a notion." He immediately commenced with the sledge, and Satan sang out with a considerable want of firmness. "Am I heavy enough!" said Bill.

"Lighter, lighter, William, if you love me. I haven't been well latterly, Mr. Dawson—I have been delicate—my health, in short, is in a very precarious state, Mr. Dawson." "I can believe *that*," said Bill, "and it will be more so before I have done with you. Am I doing it right?" "Bill," said Nick, is this gentlemanly treatment in your own respectable shop?

Do you think, if you dropped into my little place, that I'd act this rascally part towards you? Have you no compunction?" "I know," replied Bill, sledging away with vehemence, "that you're notorious for giving your friends a *warm* welcome. Divil an ould youth more so; but you must be daling in bad coin, must you? However, good or bad, you're in for a sweat now, you sinner. Am I doin' it purty?"

"Lovely, William—but, if possible, a little more delicate."—"Oh, how delicate you are! Maybe a cup o' tay would sarve you, or a little small gruel to compose your stomach."

"Mr. Dawson," said the gentleman in the purse, "hold your hand and let us understand one another. I have a proposal to make."—"Hear the sinner anyhow," said the wife.—"Name your own sum," said Satan, "only set me free."—"No, the sorra may take the toe you'll budge till you let Bill off," said the wife; "hould him hard, Bill, barrin' he sets *you* clear of your engagement.—"There it is, my posy," said Bill; "that's the condition. If you don't give *me up*, here's at you once more—and you must double the cash you gave the last time, too. So, if you're of that opinion, say *ay*—leave the cash and be off."

The money again appeared in a glittering heap before Bill, upon which he exclaimed—"The *ay* has it, you dog. Take to pour pumps now, and fair weather after you, you vagrant; but Nicholas—Nick—here, here—" The other looked back, and saw Bill, with a broad grin upon him, shaking the purse at him—"Nicholas come back," said he, "I'm short a guinea." Nick shook his fist, and disappeared.

It would be useless to stop now, merely to inform our readers that Bill was beyond improvement. In short he once more took to his old habits, and lived on exactly in the same manner as before. He had two sons—one as great a blackguard as himself, and who was also named after him; the other was a well-conducted, virtuous young man, called James, who left his father, and having relied upon his own industry

and honest perseverance in life, arrived afterwards to great wealth, and built the town called Castle Dawson; which is so called from its founder until this day.

Bill, at length, in spite of all his wealth, was obliged, as he himself said, "to travel,"—in other words, he fell asleep one day, and forgot to awaken; or, in still plainer terms, he died.

Now, it is usual, when a man dies, to close the history of his life and adventures at once; but with our hero this cannot be the case. The moment Bill departed, he very naturally bent his steps towards the residence of St. Moroky, as being, in his opinion, likely to lead him towards the snuggest berth he could readily make out. On arriving he gave a very humble kind of a knock, and St. Moroky appeared.

"God save your Reverence!" said Bill, very submissively.

"Be off: there's no admittance here for so poor a youth as you are," said St. Moroky.

He was now so cold and fatigued that he cared little where he went, provided only, as he said himself, "he could rest his bones, and get an air of the fire."; Accordingly, after arriving at a large black gate, he knocked, as before, and was told he would get *instant* admittance the moment he gave his name.

"Billy Dawson," he replied.

"Off, instantly," said the porter to his companions, "and let his Majesty know that the rascal he dreads so much is here at the gate."

Such a racket and tumult were never heard as the very mention of Billy Dawson created.

In the meantime, his old acquaintance came running towards the gate with such haste and consternation, that his tail was several times nearly tripping up his heels.

"Don't admit that rascal," he shouted; "bar the gate—make every chain, and lock, and bolt, fast—I won't be safe—and I won't stay here, nor none of us need stay here, if he gets in—my bones are sore yet after him. No, no—begone you villain—you'll get no entrance here—I know you too well."

Bill could not help giving a broad, malicious grin at Satan, and, putting his nose through the bars, he exclaimed—"Ha! you ould dog, I have you afraid of me at last, have I?"

He had scarcely uttered the words, when his foe, who stood inside, instantly tweaked him by the nose, and Bill felt as if he had been gripped by the same red-hot tongs with which he himself had formerly tweaked the nose of Nicholas.

Bill then departed, but soon found that in consequence of the inflammable materials which strong drink had thrown into his nose, that organ immediately took fire, and, indeed, to tell the truth, kept burning night and day, winter and summer, without ever once going out, from that hour to this.

Such was the sad fate of Billy Dawson, who has been walking without stop or stay, from place to place ever since; and in consequence of the flame on his nose, and his beard being tangled like a wisp of hay, he has been christened by the country folk Will-o'-the-Wisp, while as it were, to show the mischief of his disposition, the circulating knave, knowing that he must seek the coldest bogs and quagmires in order to cool his nose, seizes upon that opportunity of misleading the unthinking and tipsy night travellers from their way, just that he may have the satisfaction of still taking in as many as possible.

THE END.

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